花とゆめCOMICS

ざ・ちぇんじ!

山内直実 原作 氷室冴子 3

花とゆめ COMICS

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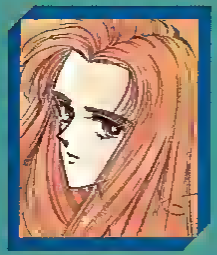
ざ・ちぇんじ!〔3〕

山内直実

883

白泉社



花とゆめCOMICS

白泉社

●山内直実の本

厩ケ丘物語

雑居時代　全3巻

ざ・ちぇんじ！　全4巻

なんて素敵にジャパネスク　①

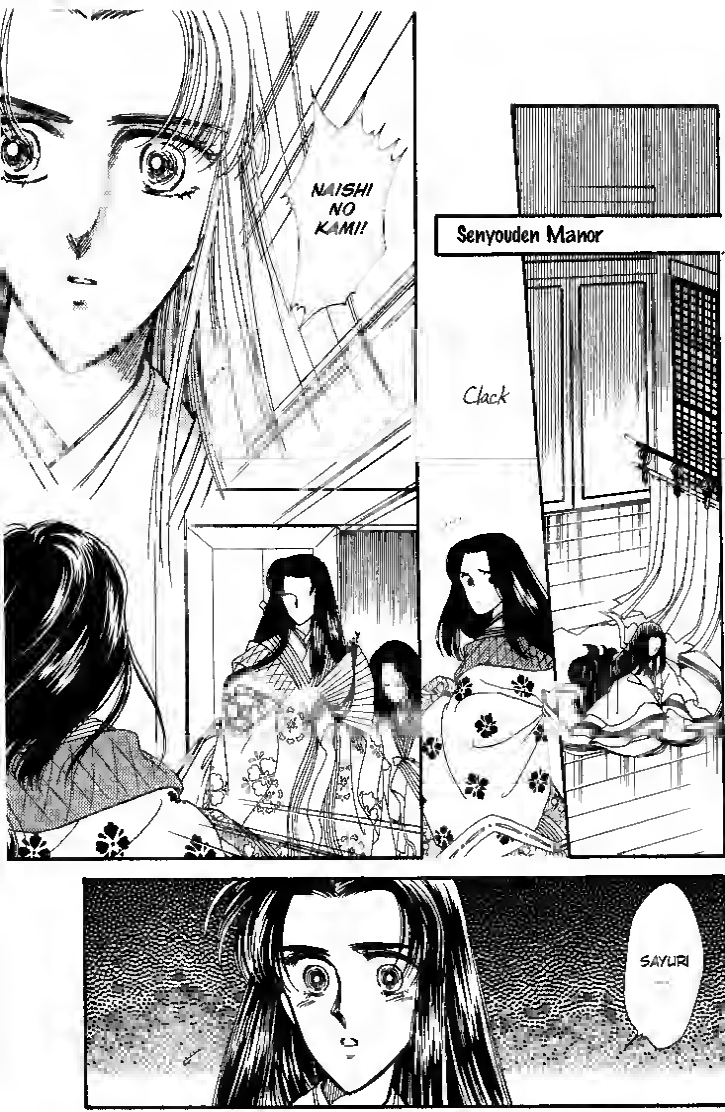
――花とゆめコミックス――

カードギャラリー　山内直実

作品かいせつ

三の姫の浮気の相手が宰相中将と知り、2人を何とかしようとする綺羅は逆に宰相中将の熱烈求愛でキスをされてしまう!!（妊娠しちゃった!!!）と大誤解をした綺羅は失踪!!　弟の尚侍をはじめ宮中は大大大パニックに!!!　あまた人気!!「ざ・ちぇんじ!」第3巻は他1作品を収録

集英社文庫コバルト・シリーズ「ざ・ちぇんじ!」より



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I SAID NO!!
ABOUT THAT, SAYURI
SO ...
DID THE CROWN PRINCESS ALLOW YOU TO RETURN HOME?
CROWN PRINCESS
I DEFINITELY WON'T ALLOW NAISHI NO KAMI TO LEAVE!
.....
BAWL
I don't care. You can't go home!
THE SECOND I SAY "COME," YOU'LL BE THERE!
NEVER!
I'LL NEVER ALLOW NAISHI NO KAMI TO GO AWAY. YOU'LL ALWAYS BY MY SIDE!
YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO GO HOME!

WELL...
YOU SEE...
IN SHORT...
PERMISSION WAS DENIED ONCE AGAIN, WASN'T IT?
Dash
W-
W... WAIT A MINUTE!
THAT'S FINE!
I'LL GO BACK ALONE. YOU CAN STAY HERE FOR ALL I CARE.
SAYURI?!
IF YOU GO HOME NOW WHO'S GOING TO TAKE CARE OF MY PERSONAL MATTERS?!
I CAN BARELY PULL IT OFF AS IT IS, COVERING THE SECRET OF MY GENDER...
Grrr!!
Eek
I KNOW THAT!

BUT I CAN'T SIT BY INDIFFERENTLY ANY LONGER!
BECAUSE KIRA-SAMA ...
KIRA-SAMA HERSELF ENTRUSTED NAISHI NO KAMI TO MY CARE. I'M FULLY AWARE OF MY DUTY!
SAYUKI ...
SEEMS TO BE SUFFERING FROM A STRANGE DISEASE. WHEN I THINK OF THAT, I...!
ABOUT A WEEK AGO.
KIKA-SAMA SUDDENLY STOPPED COMING TO THE PALACE

SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED.
SHE'S BEEN DEAD WORRIED ABOUT THE 3RD LADY RECENTLY
BUT THERE SEEMS TO BE SOMETHING MORE TO IT...
fidget fidget
fidget fidget
SAYURI, I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU'RE VERY ATTACHED TO MY SISTER SINCE YOU SHARED THE SAME NURSE MAID
BUT COULD IT BE THAT YOU'RE OVER-REACTING? IT'S ONLY BEEN A DAY
Definite
NO!
M-MONTHLY CYCLE... PERHAPS...?
IT'S THE GIRL'S THING...
UMM... MAYBE...
I... SEE...
I KNOW THAT WELL.
KIRA-SAMA'S PERIOD ISN'T DUE FOR ANOTHER TEN DAYS

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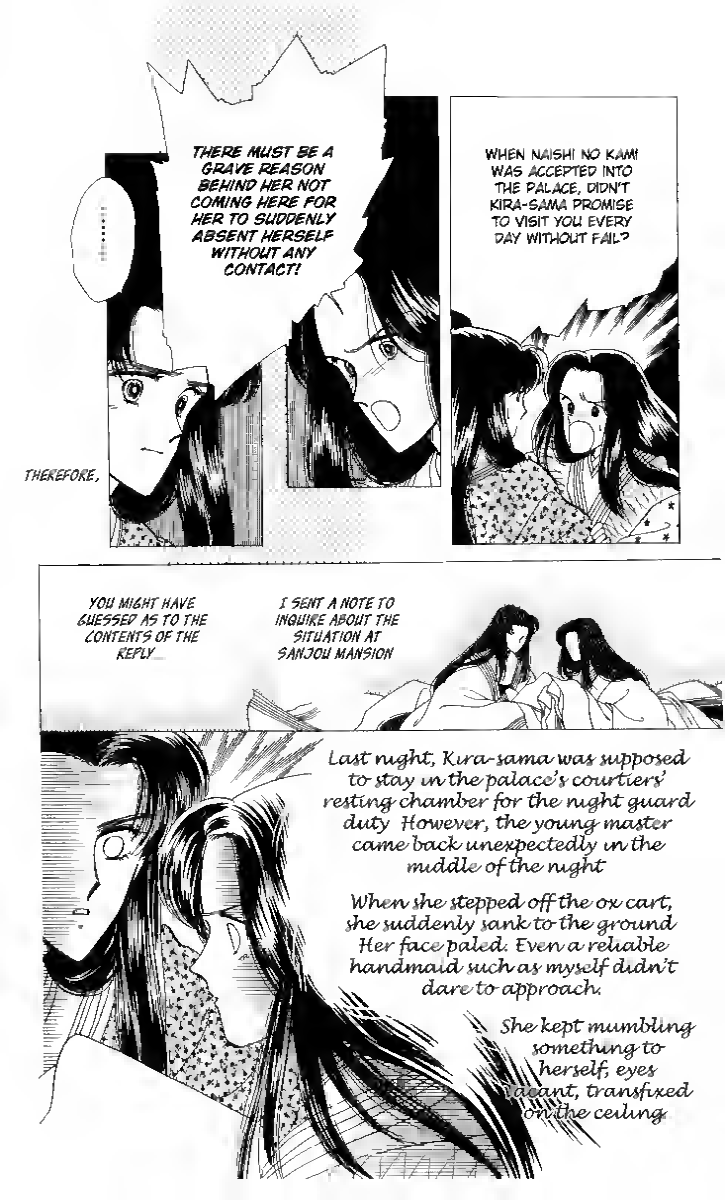
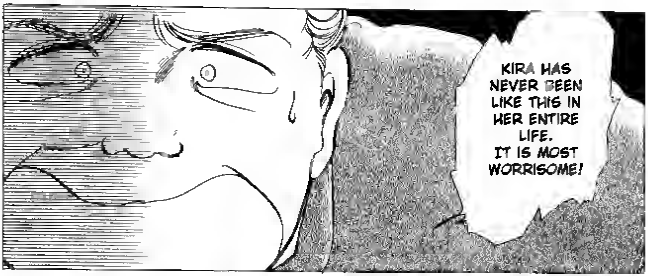
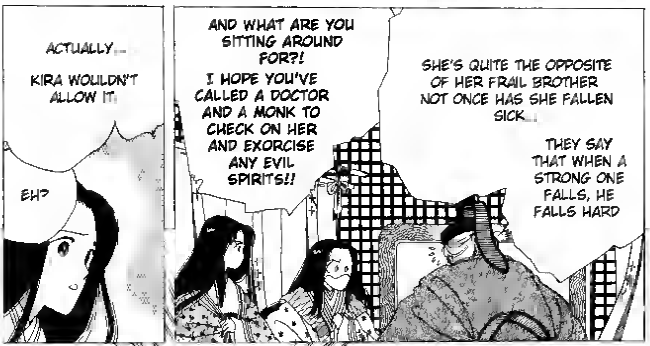
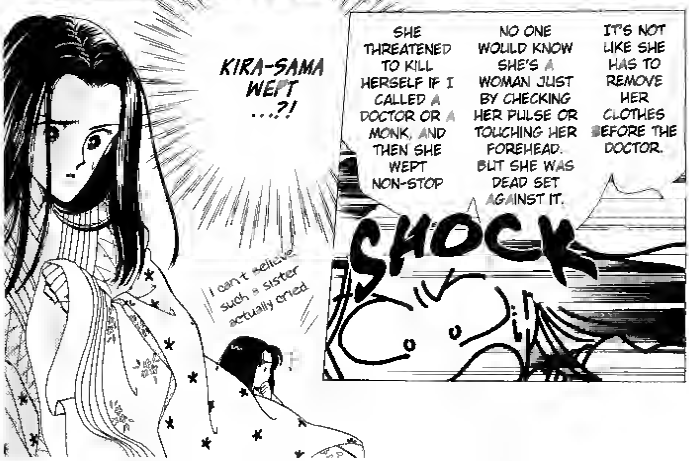
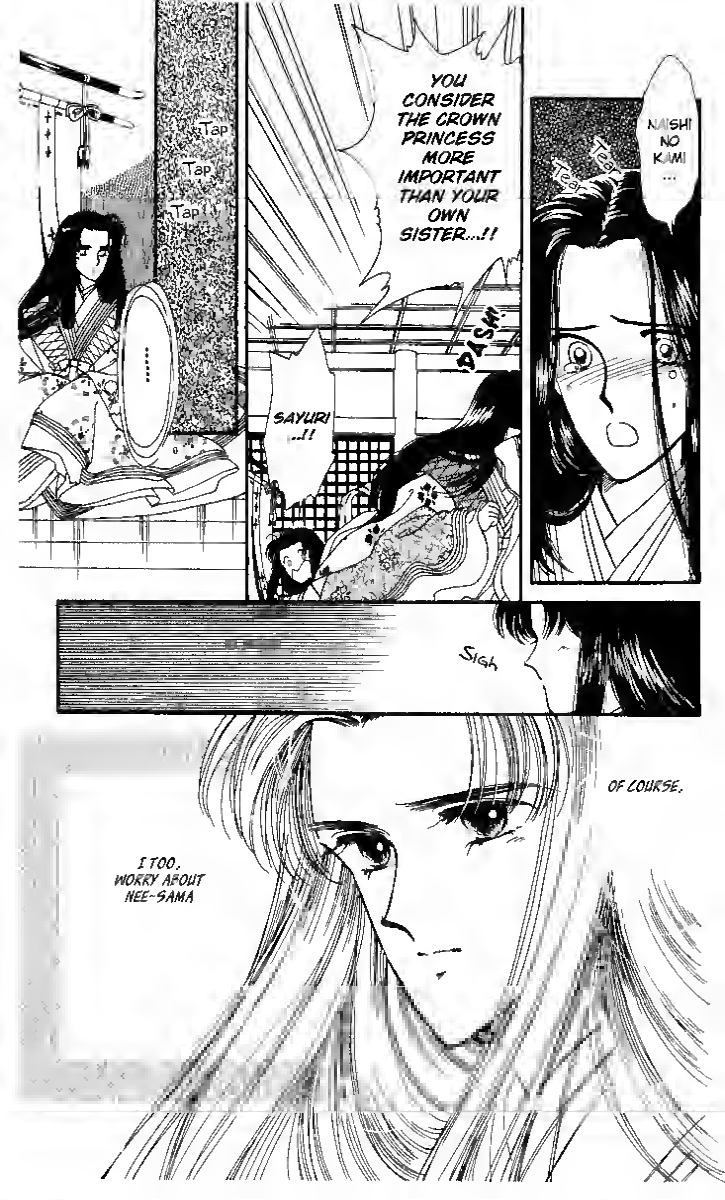

THERE MUST BE A GRAVE REASON BEHIND HER NOT COMING HERE FOR HER TO SUDDENLY ABSENT HERSELF WITHOUT ANY CONTACT!
.....
THEREFORE,
WHEN NAISHI NO KAMI WAS ACCEPTED INTO THE PALACE, DIDN'T KIRA-SAMA PROMISE TO VISIT YOU EVERY DAY WITHOUT FAIL?
I SENT A NOTE TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE SITUATION AT SANJOU MANSION
YOU MIGHT HAVE GUESSED AS TO THE CONTENTS OF THE REPLY...
Last night, Kira-sama was supposed to stay in the palace's courtiers' resting chamber for the night guard duty. However, the young master came back unexpectedly in the middle of the night.
When she stepped off the ox cart, she suddenly sank to the ground. Her face paled. Even a reliable handmaid such as myself didn't dare to approach.
She kept mumbling something to herself, eyes vacant, transfixed on the ceiling.


KIRA HAS NEVER BEEN LIKE THIS IN HER ENTIRE LIFE. IT IS MOST WORRISOME!


ACTUALLY...
KIRA WOULDN'T ALLOW IT.
EH?
AND WHAT ARE YOU SITTING AROUND FOR?!
I HOPE YOU'VE CALLED A DOCTOR AND A MONK TO CHECK ON HER AND EXORCISE ANY EVIL SPIRITS!!
SHE'S QUITE THE OPPOSITE OF HER FRAIL BROTHER NOT ONCE HAS SHE FALLEN SICK...
THEY SAY THAT WHEN A STRONG ONE FALLS, HE FALLS HARD


KIRA-SAMA WEPT ...?!
I can't believe such a sister actually cried
SHE THREATENED TO KILL HERSELF IF I CALLED A DOCTOR OR A MONK, AND THEN SHE WEPT NON-STOP
NO ONE WOULD KNOW SHE'S A WOMAN JUST BY CHECKING HER PULSE OR TOUCHING HER FOREHEAD. BUT SHE WAS DEAD SET AGAINST IT.
IT'S NOT LIKE SHE HAS TO REMOVE HER CLOTHES BEFORE THE DOCTOR.
SHOCK

THE STRONG KIRA-SAMA
SHE MUST CERTAINLY BE TERRIBLY ILL!
FOR SOMEONE LIKE KIRA-SAMA TO WEEP...
I CAN HARDLY GET ANYTHING OUT OF SADAIJIN. THIS IS VEXING.
I MUST GO BACK TO CHECK UP ON HER MYSELF...
OH GOD, I SHOULD HAVE STAYED BY HER SIDE...!
BUT SAYURI, THE CROWN PRINCESS...
...
NAISHI NO KAMI, DO YOU NOT CARE ABOUT YOUR OWN SISTER?!
Yeek
HAS IT EVER OCCURRED TO YOU TO RISK THE CROWN PRINCESS' ANGER AND GO HOME ANYWAY?!
THINK OF WHEN YOU ENTERED THE PALACE, HOW KIRA-SAMA BECAME SO THIN RUNNING LEFT AND RIGHT TO SMOOTH EVERY LITTLE DETAIL FOR YOU. HOW SHE NEGLECTED HERSELF TO CARE FOR YOU ALL THE TIME...!


Tap
Tap
Tap
.....
YOU CONSIDER THE CROWN PRINCESS MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOUR OWN SISTER...!!
SAYURI ...!!
DASH
NAISHI NO KAMI ...
Tap
Tap
Sigh
OF COURSE.
I TOO, WORRY ABOUT HEE-SAMA

T...THAT'S STRANGE, I USED TO HATE THE IDEA OF BEING HERE SO MUCH...
BUT I ALSO FEAR TO UPSET THE CROWN PRINCESS
WHICH MAY LEAD TO MY EXILE FROM THE INNER COURT
IT'S JUST AS SAYUKI SAID.
.....
I WANT NAISHI NO KAMI TO STAY BY MY SIDE!!
BUT
IF I WAS TRULY WORRIED ABOUT NEE-SAMA, I SHOULD HAVE RETURNED HOME EVEN THOUGH I MIGHT HAVE OFFENDED THE CROWN PRINCESS
BLUSH
.....

in the mean time,
at Sadaijin's Sanjou mansion,
our Lord Kira is in so much distress she can barely sleep.
COULD IT BE...
THAT I'VE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH THE CROWN PRINCESS...?
first love

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THAT I'D BE HAVING A BABY TOO!
I NEVER THOUGHT
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
AHH... BUT ANYWAY...
IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME THAT SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU WOULD HAVE DONE SOMETHING LIKE THAT TO ME TOO
I DID THE SAME THING THAT THE 3RD LADY DID THAT NIGHT...
Ulah
SO I MUST BE GOING TO HAVE A BABY!

EVERYONE WILL KNOW I'M A WOMAN
IT'S BEEN A WEEK SINCE I LOCKED MYSELF IN THIS ROOM WITHOUT ALLOWING A DOCTOR TO CHECK ON ME OR A MONK TO EXORCISE EVIL SPIRITS.
I'M AFRAID THEY'LL KNOW I'M PREGNANT.
BUT ONCE MY STOMACH BALLOONS UP, I WON'T BE ABLE TO HIDE THE SECRET ANYMORE.
HA HA HA HA HA
THE 3RD LADY WILL BE RIDICULED FOR MARRYING A WOMAN
MY BROTHER WILL BE SCORNED FOR LIFE FOR CROSS-DRESSING AS A WOMAN
FATHER WILL BE EXILED BEYOND THE BORDERS
I'M FACING THE GREATEST TROUBLE IN MY LIFE, AND I HAVE NO ONE TO TALK TO?!
WHO SHOULD I TURN TO AT TIME LIKE THIS? MY MOTHER IS USELESS FOR ADVICE MY FATHER IS ALREADY PANICKING OVER THE 3RD LADY'S PREGNANCY

WHEN HE LEARNED ABOUT THE 3RD LADY'S PREGNANCY, UNLIKE FATHER, HE WAS ABLE TO ANALYSE THE SITUATION WITH A COOL HEAD
AND HE SEEMED KNOWLEDGEABLE ON THE SUBJECT OF HOW A BABY IS BORN
How the Baby is Born
Lecturer: Kira Naishi no Kami
THAT'S RIGHT
MY BROTHER
IF IT'S MY BROTHER, KIRA, HE MUST KNOW HOW TO MAKE THE BABY GO BACK TO WHERE IT CAME FROM!!

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KIRA WOULD TAKE A COUPLE MONO-IMI DAYS EACH MONTH,
BUT IT'S BEEN A WEEK....
IN THE PAST
WHEN I ASKED SADAIJIN BECAME ODDLY FLUSTERED AND QUICKLY CHANGED THE SUBJECT
WHAT'S GOING ON?
It it it's nothing serious. Eh heh heh
I'VE TEASED HIM ABOUT THE 3RD LADY SO MANY TIMES
I'M WORRIED

COULD THAT
BE THE REASON?!
N-NO
EVERYTHING I DID WAS IN KIRA'S BEST INTEREST
WELL THAT'S NOT
CAN'T BE!
BECAUSE OF THE QUEER KIND OF LOVE IS IT?
YOUR MAJESTY
KIRA SANMI NO CHUUJOU IS HERE TO SEE YOU
KIRA'S HERE?!
SOLT
I WAS PROBABLY TOO PARANOID HE MUST BE FEELING BETTER NOW
SPEAK OF THE DEVIL

START
WHA
WHAT HAPPENED?
HE'S BECOME SO FRAIL AND THIN!!
?
the clothing is loose

KIRA
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT NOW?
WHAT KIND OF SICKNESS WAS IT...?
UH...
IT-IT WAS ONLY A COLD...
HOW THE HELL CAN I TELL HIM, "I'M PREGNANT"?!
BUT I'M FINE NOW!
.....
HOW IS HE FINE...?
HE LOOKS LIKE HE COULD FAINT AT ANY MINUTE!
BUT YOU SEEM QUITE PALE
WHY DON'T YOU GO BACK AND REST FOR TODAY...?
No, your majesty!!

WHILE I WAS SICK, I WAS VERY ANXIOUS ABOUT MY BR... ER... NAISHI NO KAMI.
HOW LONELY AND SAD SHE MUST HAVE BEEN WITHOUT ME COMING TO VISIT EVERY DAY...
I CAN'T LEAVE WITHOUT AT LEAST GOING TO CHECK IN ON HER, TO BE SURE THAT SHE'S WELL, YOUR MAJESTY ...!
KIKA'S
.....
WORRIED ABOUT HIS SISTER

I TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THIS WEAKNESS OF HIS, AND HAD HIS SISTER AFFOINTED NAISHI NO KAMI SO THAT HE WOULD COME TO THE PALACE AND LET ME SEE HIM EVERYDAY
I MANIPULATED HIM THROUGH HIS LOVE FOR HIS SISTER!
Totally Depressed
AH, I HATE MYSELF...
☆
HE FORCED HIMSELF TO COME TO WORK EVEN THOUGH HE'S STILL UNWELL
JUST TO PAY A VISIT TO HIS SISTER?

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Senyouden Manor
KIRA-SAMA!
MY GOODNESS
YOU'VE BECOME SO THIN...!
SOB SOB
SAYURI
KIRA-SAMA ...?!
I HAVE SOME-THING TO DISCUSS WITH MY BROTHER
PLEASE KEEP THE ROOM CLEAR FOR JUST THE TWO OF US
HUH?
You want me kept out too?! After I was so worried about you!!
IF ONLY I HAD BEEN BY YOUR SIDE,
I WOULDN'T HAVE LET YOU LOSE WEIGHT LIKE THIS!
YOU'RE OVERREACTING, SAYURI. I'M FINE
BUT, KIRA-SAMA!

NEE-SAMA!
ARE YOU FEELING BETTER NOW?
SHE'S REALLY BECOME SO THIN
THE CROWN PRINCESS THREW A FIT EVERY DAY I COULDN'T MAKE AN ESCAPE TO VISIT YOU
SORRY
NEVER MIND, NEVER MIND!
EVEN IF YOU VISITED ME IT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN THE RIGHT TIME TO TALK ANYWAY
UM
ANYWAY
I'VE SOMETHING TO ASK
WHAT IS IT?
ER...
HOW TO...
sfx: Eh?!
MAKE A BABY

A-A-ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE ME GO INTO MORE DETAIL THAN LAST TIME?!
I really can't do this!
H-How-
HOW TO MAKE A BABY?!!
HUH?
IT'S FINE YOU DON'T HAVE TO I ALREADY KNOW
OH
YOU ALREADY KNOW?
YEAH
HOW DID SHE
WELL,
WHAT I WANT TO ASK IS
IS THERE A WAY TO MAKE THE BABY GO BACK
TO WHERE IT ORIGINALLY WAS?
YOU SEEMED KNOWLEDGE-ABLE ABOUT THIS SORT OF THING
ah ha ah ha ha
.....

IT CAN'T BE THAT NEE-SAMA
DISAPPROVES SO MUCH OF THE 3RD LADY'S AFFAIR, THAT SHE WOULD WANT TO GET RID OF THE CHILD?
NEE-SAMA!
YOU AREN'T... SERIOUS ABOUT THIS, ARE YOU?!
OF- OF COURSE,
I'M SERIOUS
EH?
TO MAKE THE BABY GO BACK TO WHERE IT CAME FROM
A BABY MIGHT TAKE 10 MONTHS AND 10 DAYS TO COME OUT IN THIS WORLD, BUT IT HAS A LIFE AND IS GROWING EVERY DAY IN ITS MOTHER'S WOMB!
THEN I CAN'T DISCLOSE INFORMATION ABOUT SUCH AN INHUMAN AND CRUEL SOLUTION!

KILL
KILLING
THE BABY ...?
YES!
SO NO MATTER HOW MAD YOU ARE AT THE 3RD LADY...!
OH NO
Not listening anymore
I CAN'T BELIEVE
I EVER CONSIDERED SUCH CRUEL SOLUTION !
IS THE SAME AS KILLING IT!!
I CAN'T THINK OF KILLING IT.
A BABY IS GROWING IN MY WOMB
UNBELIEV-ABLE AS IT SOUNDS

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OH, BUT WHAT SHOULD I DO?
IF ANYONE FINDS OUT THAT I'M CARRYING A CHILD?
THIS IS NOT JUST MY PROBLEM ANYMORE!
WHAT WOULD BECOME OF MY FATHER AND BROTHER,
BECAUSE IT'S ALSO A LIFE
THAT I HAVE TO PROTECT AND CHERISH
AH!
NEE-SAMA, ARE YOU LISTENING ?!
I JUST THOUGHT
THAT IF A BABY COULD BE MADE SO EASILY, THAT THERE WOULD BE AN EASY SOLUTION TO RETURN IT AS WELL
I'M SORRY

YOU KNOW
HM?
COME ON!
YOU'VE GOT TO BE STRONG AND OPEN-MINDED TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF THE 3RD LADY AND THE BABY WHO'S GOING TO BE BORN SOON!
YES
HE'S ALREADY THINKING LIKE A MAN
HOW... HOW IN THE WORLD IS THAT POSSIBLE?
THERE'S NOTHING SO CONVENIENT AS THAT!
YOU'VE BECOME MORE MANLY LATELY
BUT NEE-SAMA, A TRUE MAN WOULDN'T BE WEARING A WOMAN'S KIMONO, ACTING FRAIL AS I DO
YOU THINK SO?

ARGH!
WHEN THE HELL WILL I GET OUT OF THIS STUPID SITUATION?!
IF I CONTINUE TO CROSS-DRESS, THEN EVEN IF I FIND A GIRL I LIKE, I CAN'T CONFESS OR PROPOSE TO HER.
OH DEAR THIS BOY, HAS HE FOUND A WOMAN HE LIKES?
Which lady I wonder?
tap
tap
tap
tap
KIRA-SAMA REALLY CAME?
HE MUST BE WITH NAISHI NO KAMI NOW.

Flap
ACK!
THE CROWN PRINCESS?!
YOU MUST HAVE SNEAKED OUT WHILE SANMI NO TSUBONE, THE LADY-IN-WAITING, WASN'T LOOKING, AGAIN.
SHE CAME WITHOUT AN ESCORT...
SHUSHU
EHEH
IT'S FINE!
PLEASE ACCEPT MY MOST SINCERE APOLOGIES.
YES, MY LADY I'M SORRY TO HAVE WORRIED THE CROWN PRINCESS
I'M CLOSE TO THE EMPEROR'S SUITE
FEELING WELL NOW?
HOW IS YOUR HEALTH?
Hey! Act properly
WOW
IT'S REALLY KIRA!

BLUSH
I'M HONORED TO HEAR THAT MY LADY IS SO FOND OF NAISHI NO KAMI
NOT AT ALL, MY LADY.
I SHOULD BE THE ONE TO APOLOGIZE FOR NOT ALLOWING NAISHI NO KAMI TO GO HOME TO VISIT YOU.
NO
BUT I'D HAVE BEEN SO LONELY WITHOUT HER BY MY SIDE
AH, WHAT?
SO THE GIRL HE SAID HE LIKED...
?!
Dazed
TH-TH-T HAT'S RIGHT.
I DON'T H-HATE NAISHI NO KAMI
AT-AT ALL...
?
WHY THE RED FACE?
IS THE CROWN PRINCESS?!

SA-SANM! NO TSUBONE IS PROBABLY FRANTIC AT MY BEING MISSING.
I'D BETTER GO BACK.
retreat
KIRA.
LET'S PLAY A GAME OF DICE TOGETHER SOMETIME.
bye-bye
ISN'T SHE CUTE! BLUSHING LIKE THAT
N-NEE-SAMA, HOW COULD YOU SUDDENLY BLURT OUT SUCH A THING...
THE CROWN PRINCESS MUST BE STARTLED
WHAT'S THIS?
MY WORDS HAD NO DEEPER MEANING AT ALL
WHAT'RE YOU BLUSHING HERE FOR?
loves to tease
...
So this is you're clever huh. Unlike with other things
BY THE WAY, DOES THE CROWN PRINCESS KNOW
THAT YOU'RE A MAN?

HOW CAN SHE KNOW?
WHO IN THEIR RIGHT MIND WOULD IMAGINE A GUY IN THIS FORM?
AND HE'S EVEN ACCEPTED IN THE COURT AS A NAISHI NO KAMI, FOR CRYING OUT LOUD!
OH I HATE IT.
I HATE, HATE THIS LIFE!
...
Sanjou Mansion
SINCE MAKING THE BABY GO BACK TO WHERE IT CAME FOR'M IS OUT OF THE QUESTION,
I'M BACK TO SQUARE ONE.

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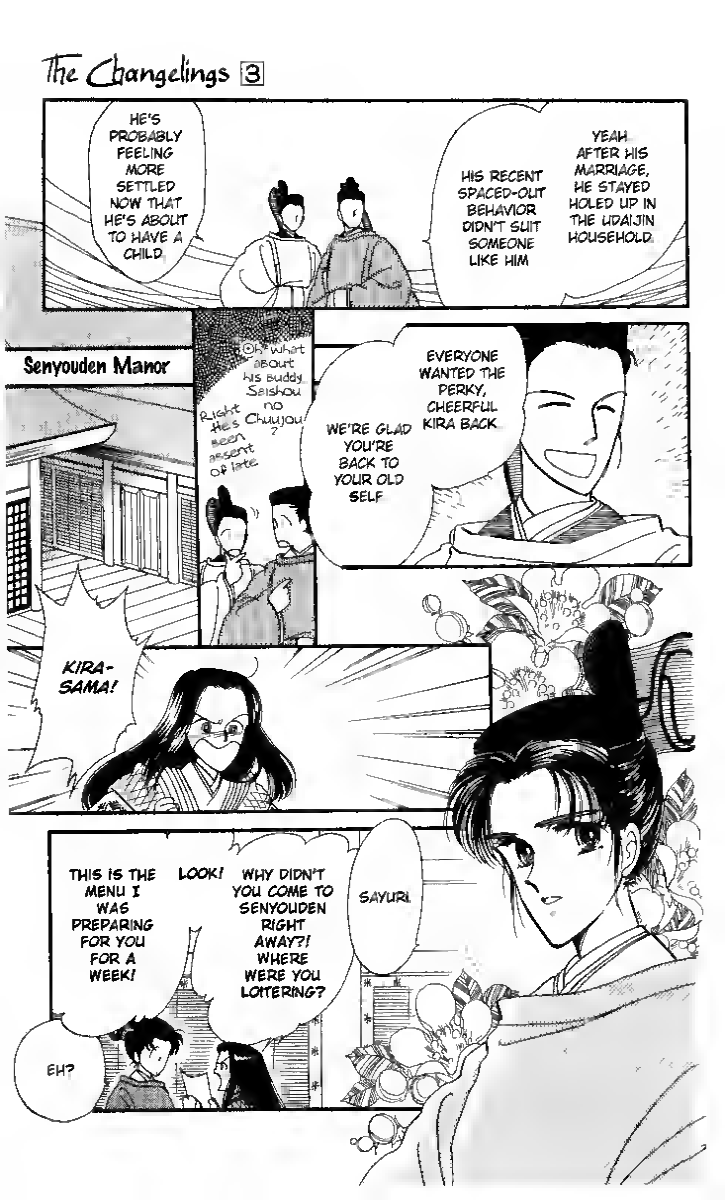
EVEN IF THEY RESORT TO MONASTICISM, BEING BRANDED OUTCASTS, ONE CAN ONLY WONDER IF THEY'LL BE ABLE TO SURVIVE BY LIVING OFF PEOPLE'S CHARITY.
WE MAY BE ABLE TO MAKE A LIVING SOMEWHERE ELSE BUT I IMAGINE FATHER'S PROPERTIES WOULD BE SEIZED BY THE COURT.
TO ESCAPE THE SCANDAL AND RIDICULE
OUR FAMILY'S REPUTATION WILL CRUMBLE SADAIJIN, MY FATHER, AND MY BROTHER WILL HAVE TO LEAVE THE CAPITAL.
ONCE MY STOMACH IS AS BIG AS THE 3RD LADY'S, EVERYONE WILL KNOW I'M PREGNANT.
IS HIDDEN FROM THE PUBLIC?
BUT WHAT IF MY PREGNANCY
HE WON'T COWER TO THAT COMMANDEERING MOTHER, LADY YUMENO, ANY LONGER. WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT, HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO TURN BACK TO A MAN WITHOUT MUCH TROUBLE.
AS FOR MY BROTHER, HE'S BECOMING STRONGER EACH DAY, BOTH PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY.
The royal counsellor, Sadaijin.
FATHER SHOULD BE ABLE TO KEEP HIS TOP RANK IN COURT.
THINGS WOULD REMAIN UNCHANGED.

THEN
BOTH MY BROTHER AND THE 3RD LADY MIGHT FIND HAPPINESS WITH THEIR LOVED ONES
LOVED ONES
I NEED TO DO MY BEST TO MAKE EVERYONE HAPPY
IN ANY CASE
OH... OH NO.
WHY DID THE EMPEROR'S IMAGE SUDDENLY SPRING TO MIND?

The Court
YES...
I HAVE TO...
OH, ISN'T THAT KIRA?
IT'S BEEN A WHILE
OH...
WHAT'S THIS NOW? HE LOOKS LIVELY
HE'S GOING AROUND GREETING EVERYONE SO CHEERFULLY. JUST LIKE HE DID BEFORE HIS MARRIAGE HE'D BEEN QUITE GLUM SINCE THE WEDDING
KIRA, YOU'VE COME?
ARE YOU FEELING WELL
YES THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN
KIRA!
HELLO


HE'S PROBABLY FEELING MORE SETTLED NOW THAT HE'S ABOUT TO HAVE A CHILD.
YEAH. AFTER HIS MARRIAGE, HE STAYED HOLED UP IN THE UDAIJIN HOUSEHOLD.
HIS RECENT SPACED-OUT BEHAVIOR DIDN'T SUIT SOMEONE LIKE HIM
Senyouden Manor
Oh, what about his buddy Seishou no Chuujou?
Right. He's been absent of late.
EVERYONE WANTED THE PERKY, CHEERFUL KIRA BACK.
WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE BACK TO YOUR OLD SELF
KIRA-SAMA!
SAYURI.
WHY DIDN'T YOU COME TO SENYOUDEN RIGHT AWAY?! WHERE WERE YOU LOITERING?
LOOK!
THIS IS THE MENU I WAS PREPARING FOR YOU FOR A WEEK!
EH?

THANK YOU, SAYURI.
I'LL DO THAT.
HUH?
I'M SURE YOU'LL GET BETTER WITHIN A WEEK. OTHERWISE, I WOULD...
GIVE THIS MENU TO THE COOK AT SANJOU MANSION AND HAVE THEM FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS. YOU MUST EAT IT ALL TOO!
YOU WOULD NEVER HAVE BECOME SO FRAIL!
IF I COULD HAVE BEEN BY YOUR SIDE.
SAYURI, BY A LADY-IN-WAITING'S STANDARDS, YOU'RE A BEAUTY.
I'M SURE YOU'LL GET SO MANY LOVE POEMS FROM MEN
DON'T FALL INTO A SWEET-TALKER'S TRAP, ALL RIGHT?
KIKA-SAMA ?
I CAN'T ALWAYS BE AROUND TO DEFEND YOUR HONOR ANYMORE.
BECAUSE IF SOMETHING HAPPENS TO YOU,

YOU TOO, KIRA BE STRONG
...!?
What's going on with you?
Y-YES
The future huh
IF YOU HAVE ENOUGH COURAGE AND ABILITY, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO GO BACK TO LIVE AS A MAN ONE DAY.
YOU HAVE A BRIGHT FUTURE AHEAD OF YOU.
?
I'M TRULY WORRIED
SHE'S BECOME INCREDIBLY OBEDIENT...
whisper whisper whisper
SAYURI NEE-SAMA SEEMS SO STRANGE. COULD IT BE THAT HER BRAIN HAS GONE HAYWIRE DURING HER SICKNESS?
You shouldn't gossip about your father like that
Awww Chuuyou ~♪
Then my father went
THAT IS TRUE...
BUT EVEN THOUGH SHE'S THIN, SHE'S VERY CHEERFUL TODAY.

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KIRA-SAN IS IN COURT TODAY
OH, HOW CAN WE WAIT FOR HIM TO PAY A VISIT, MY LADY?
SINCE HIS MARRIAGE HE'S RARELY TAKEN A STEP INTO THE BACK PALACE ANYMORE
THAT'S TRUE...
HE'S USUALLY FULL OF SPIRIT, DAZZLING AND GRACEFUL...
THOUGH SOMETIMES I WOULD CATCH A GLIMPSE OF SADNESS IN HIS FACE.
I WONDER IF SOMETHING WAS WRONG WITH HIM...
Shishinden Manor, south garden

Translator's Note: Shishinden Manor = a hall for state ceremonies

.....
BUT LAST YEAR
EVERYTHING WAS SO HECTIC I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO ADMIRE THE FLOWERS AT MY LEISURE
DURING THIS YEAR'S MUSICAL FESTIVAL, BECAUSE I WAS JUST MARRIED,
I PLAYED THIS FLUTE FOR THE EMPEROR
AND WAS GIVEN A BRANCH OF SAKURA BLOSSOMS AS A REWARD
COME TO THINK OF IT, THAT WAS ONE OF THE HAPPIEST TIMES OF MY LIFE.
THE IMAGE IN MY MEMORY OF THE EMPEROR THAT TIME WAS AS VIVID AS THE SAKURA IN FULL BLOOM

THAT WAS OBOROZUKIYO NAISHI NO KAMI
IN THE NOVEL, THE SHINING PRINCE GENJI MET UDAIJIN'S SIXTH DAUGHTER, ON A PALE MOONLIT NIGHT UNDER SAKURA TREES
AHH...
How romantic
NEXT YEAR THE SAKURA WILL BLOSSOM AGAIN WHILE I CONTINUE TO WILT
RIGHT NOW, I'M NO BETTER THAN THIS BARREN BRANCH
IS THAT NAISHI NO KAMI?
THE ONE SINGING THE POEM
I GUESS SO
NOTHING CAN MATCH THE LOVELY MISTY MOON* HUH?
TONIGHT IS A MOONLIT NIGHT AS WELL
BUT OUR SITUATIONS COULDN'T BE MORE DIFFERENT
The moonlight here is a bit too bright anyway

* (T/N) A reference to a Japanese poem by Ōe no Chisato: "Neither beaming brightly nor completely lost in clouds the hazy moon of a night in spring has nothing that can match its loveliness." The poem was alluded to in The Tale of Genji as well and gave the aforementioned Oborozukiyo ("Misty Moon") the name she is known by to most readers (poem translation credit: Edwin A. Cranston)

GIVING A CHALLENGE TO THIS SUSPICIOUS PERSON
THE EMPEROR?!
WHO'S THAT?!
HOW FORMI-DABLE
KIRA NO CHUUJOU

MY DEEPEST APOLOGIES, YOUR MAJESTY. I HAD NO IDEA IT WAS YOU
BOW
WHY IS HE HERE...?!
THIS MAY BE THE INNER COURT, BUT TO WANDER AROUND AT NIGHT BY YOURSELF...
YOUR MAJESTY COULD BE ENDANGERED.
ONE TIME, I EVEN VENTURED AS FAR AS KITASAGA.
EVEN THOUGH I KNEW I WAS SCARING THE BODYGUARDS SENSELESS, I STILL MANAGED TO LOSE THEM
ESPECIALLY DURING MY DAYS AS CROWN PRINCE, I LOVED TO WANDER ABOUT BY MYSELF.
I GUESS SO
BUT MAYBE KIRA DOESN'T KNOW
THAT I'M AN EXPERT AT SNEAKING OUT.

HE STILL ...
THE EMPEROR
REMEMBERS SUCH AN OLD EVENT
AS WHAT HAPPENED AT KITASAGA THREE YEARS AGO
IT JUST OCCURRED TO ME...
THAT I MUST HAVE LOVED HIM ALL ALONG

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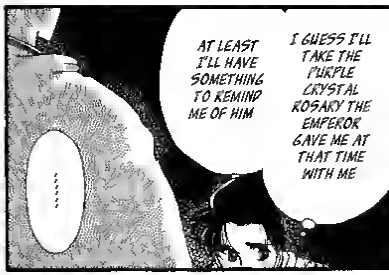
EVEN NOW, I STILL LOVE HIM


I GUESS I'LL TAKE THE PURPLE CRYSTAL ROSARY THE EMPEROR GAVE ME AT THAT TIME WITH ME
AT LEAST I'LL HAVE SOMETHING TO REMIND ME OF HIM
.....

IF ONLY THE CHILD IN MY WOMB WAS THE EMPEROR'S I MAY HAVE TO LIVE IN HIDING AND KEEP IT SECRET FROM EVERYONE. HAVING THE BABY OF THE ONE YOU LOVE IS MUCH MORE ROMANTIC
BUT INSTEAD, IT'S THE PRODUCT OF THAT BISEXUAL SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU WHO THOUGHT I WAS A GUY.
WHAT A PITIABLE THOUGHT.

I KNOW FULL WELL WHO SHE IS NOW... BUT SOMETIMES...
I CAN'T HELP BUT IMAGINE THAT THAT LADY WAS KIRA
THE ONE THE EMPEROR MET WAS...
THAT WOMAN
NOT MY MOTHER, LADY KIRA
THE ONE YOU MET WAS ME
OF COURSE

COULD NOT BE ME,
YOUR MAJESTY
AS I'M A MAN, I CAN'T BE THAT LADY FOR YOU
.....
YOU'RE RIGHT I SPOKE FOOLISHLY.
HOW-EVER,
I SOMETIMES WISH...
I HAD BEEN BROUGHT UP AS A LADY.
EH...?!
BUT THINGS HAVE COME THIS FAR NOW...
I SUPPOSE IT CAN ONLY BE A DREAM.

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CREDITS

Manga The Changel (The Changelings)
Story : HIMURO Saeko
Illust : YAMAUCHI Naomi

Raw provider Michex raw manga
Translated by Chibaya
Proof read by ran_exo
Edited by goldhair
QC by Elvisrules

: WANTED :
Japanese - English translators
(who can translate w thout furigana)
for "A Delicious Relationship"
and "Ashita no Ousama"
HELPS NEEDED
Contact us at
http://wingtipcafe.com/en
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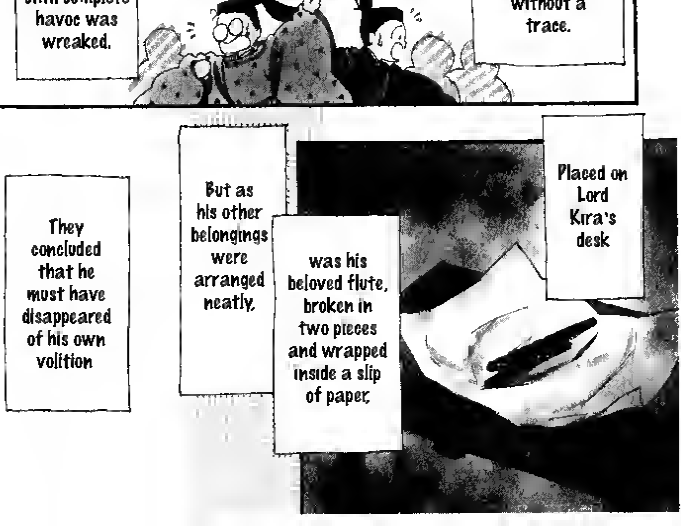
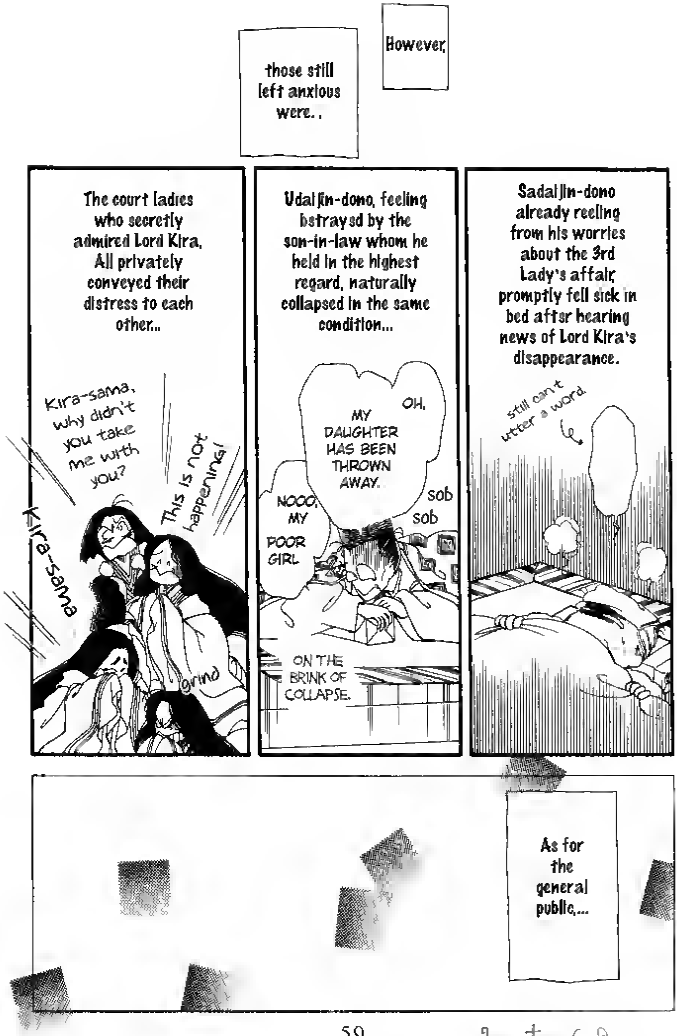
sigh
WHERE HAS NEE-SAMA GONE?
IT'S BEEN 3 MONTHS SINCE THEN
I CAN'T BELIEVE
THAT SOMEONE LIKE HER WOULD DISAPPEAR JUST LIKE THAT ..!

Lord Kira has disappeared!!

Tonight we have invited some of Kira no ouyou's friends to speak here with us
Good evening. This is the Imperial Court News
The news spread throughout court in a flash.

And,
Rumor after rumor spread until complete havoc was wreaked.
No, he's been spirited away!
Someone must have kidnapped him.
It's only expected, since the court's idol suddenly disappeared without a trace.


They concluded that he must have disappeared of his own volition
But as his other belongings were arranged neatly,
was his beloved flute, broken in two pieces and wrapped inside a slip of paper.
Placed on Lord Kira's desk


those still left anxious were..
However,
The court ladies who secretly admired Lord Kira, All privately conveyed their distress to each other...
Kira-sama, why didn't you take me with you?
This is not happening!
Kira-sama
grind
Udaijin-dono, feeling betrayed by the son-in-law whom he held in the highest regard, naturally collapsed in the same condition...
OH, MY DAUGHTER HAS BEEN THROWN AWAY.
NOOO, MY POOR GIRL
sob sob
ON THE BRINK OF COLLAPSE.
Sadaijin-dono already reeling from his worries about the 3rd Lady's affair promptly fell sick in bed after hearing news of Lord Kira's disappearance.
still can't utter a word
As for the general public,...

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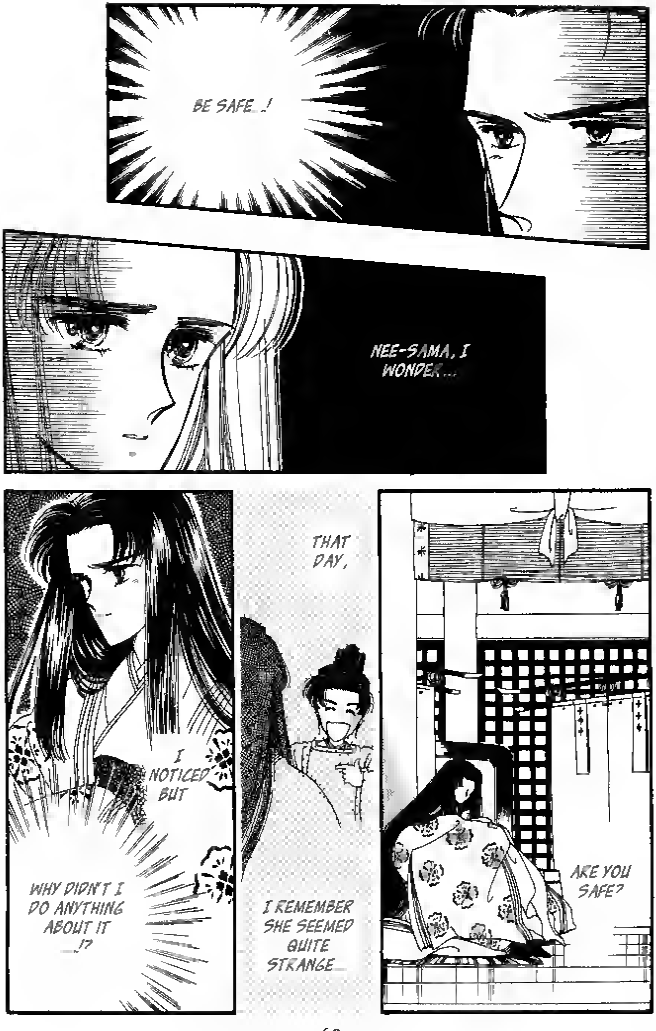
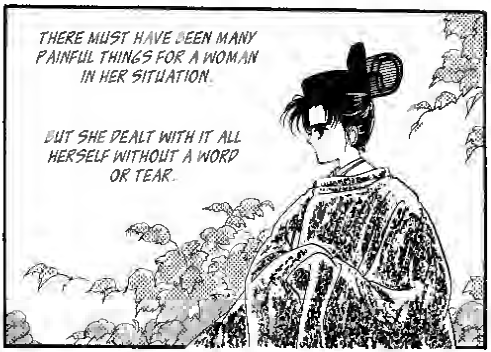
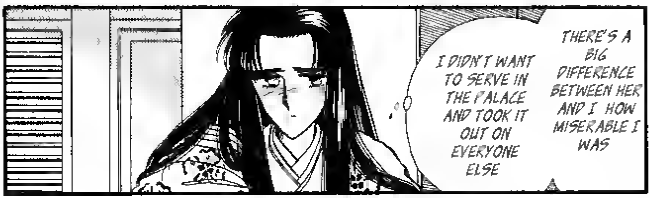
HIS WIFE, THE 3RD LADY, MUST BE DEVASTATED.
MY GOODNESS,
HIS BABY IS ALMOST DUE TOO.
MY, THAT YOUNG COURTIER HAD A BIG FUTURE AHEAD OF HIM. I WONDER WHAT UNHAPPINESS COULD HAVE CAUSED HIM TO RUN AWAY MYSTERIOUSLY LIKE THIS.
I'M SURE IT'S MY FAULT HE'S RUN AWAY.
HE MUST BE FURIOUS
WHY DID IT TURN OUT LIKE THIS ..?
.....
KIKA-SAMA
.....

Meanwhile, with the emperor,
Both the Sadaijin and Udaijin families have sent out search parties to look for Kira, but their search has yet to yield any results
This made the emperor most upset
DESPITE GOING THROUGH EVERY CORNER OF THE CAPITAL, ALL THE MONASTERIES, HOLIDAY VILLAS...
THEY'VE STILL CAME BACK EMPTY-HANDED!
GETTING INVOLVED PERSONALLY IN THE SEARCH FOR A MISSING COURTIER ISN'T SOMETHING AN EMPEROR WOULD DO PEOPLE WILL TALK
KIRA
PLEASE


BE SAFE..!
NEE-SAMA, I WONDER...
THAT DAY,
I NOTICED BUT
WHY DIDN'T I DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT ...!?
I REMEMBER SHE SEEMED QUITE STRANGE...
ARE YOU SAFE?


THERE MUST HAVE BEEN MANY PAINFUL THINGS FOR A WOMAN IN HER SITUATION.
BUT SHE DEALT WITH IT ALL HERSELF WITHOUT A WORD OR TEAR.
EVER SINCE SHE ENTERED THE PALACE AT THE AGE OF 14,
NOT ONCE HAS SHE RELIED ON ANYONE


I DIDN'T WANT TO SERVE IN THE PALACE AND TOOK IT OUT ON EVERYONE ELSE
THERE'S A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HER AND I HOW MISERABLE I WAS

SOUGHT TO CONSULT ME ESPECIALLY...

BUT WHEN THE EVER ENDURING NEE-SAMA

I DEFINITELY SHOULDN'T HAVE YELLED AT HER LIKE THAT
FOR SOMEONE LIKE NEE-SAMA WHO DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HOW A BABY WAS MADE
IT WAS NO WONDER THAT SHE THOUGHT THERE WAS A WAY TO SEND IT BACK,
AT THAT TIME...
WHY DIDN'T I ADVISE HER MORE KINDLY?
IF ONLY I WAS STRONGER...
THAT'S RIGHT!
SAYURI...

HAD ADVISED KIRA-SAMA MORE KINDLY, SHE WOULDN'T HAVE DISAPPEARED LIKE THIS!
B-BUT
THAT'S RIGHT
IF ONLY NAISHI NO KAMI...
Even talking about things like sending the baby back...
WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT WHAT I SAID THAT DAY WOULD CAUSE HER TO RUN AWAY..?
Eep!
THE CONTENT OF THE CONSULTATION HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS!
KIRA-SAMA EVEN ASKED ME TO LEAVE UPON COMING HERE TO CONSULT WITH YOU, DIDN'T SHE?!
DOESN'T THAT MEAN THAT SHE SAW YOU AS HER ONLY HOPE!?
NAO

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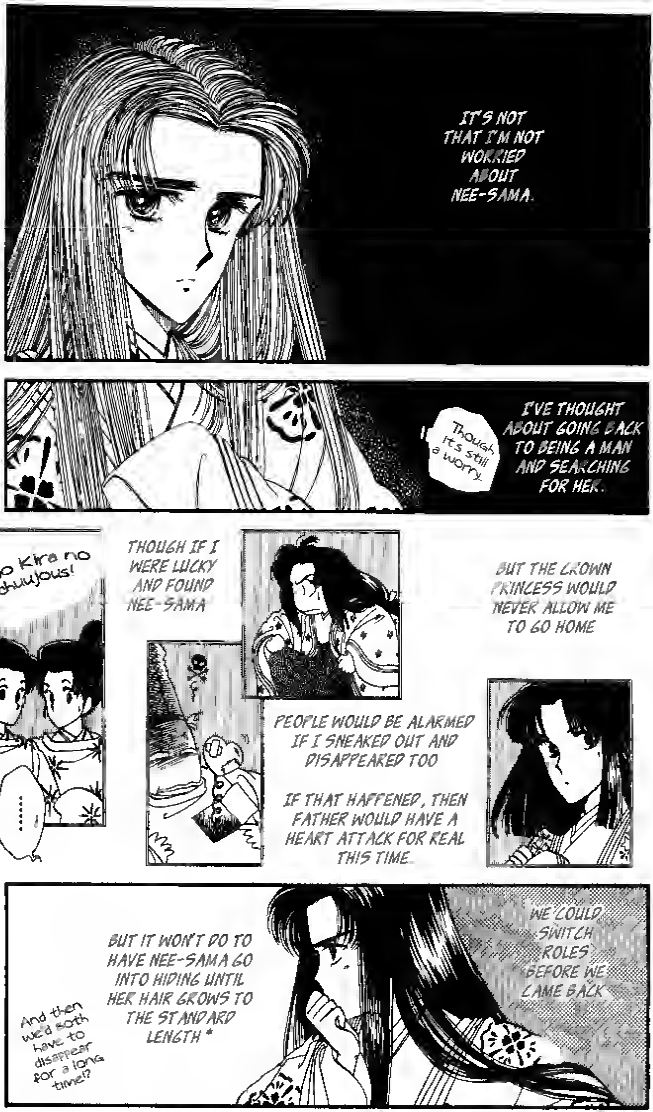
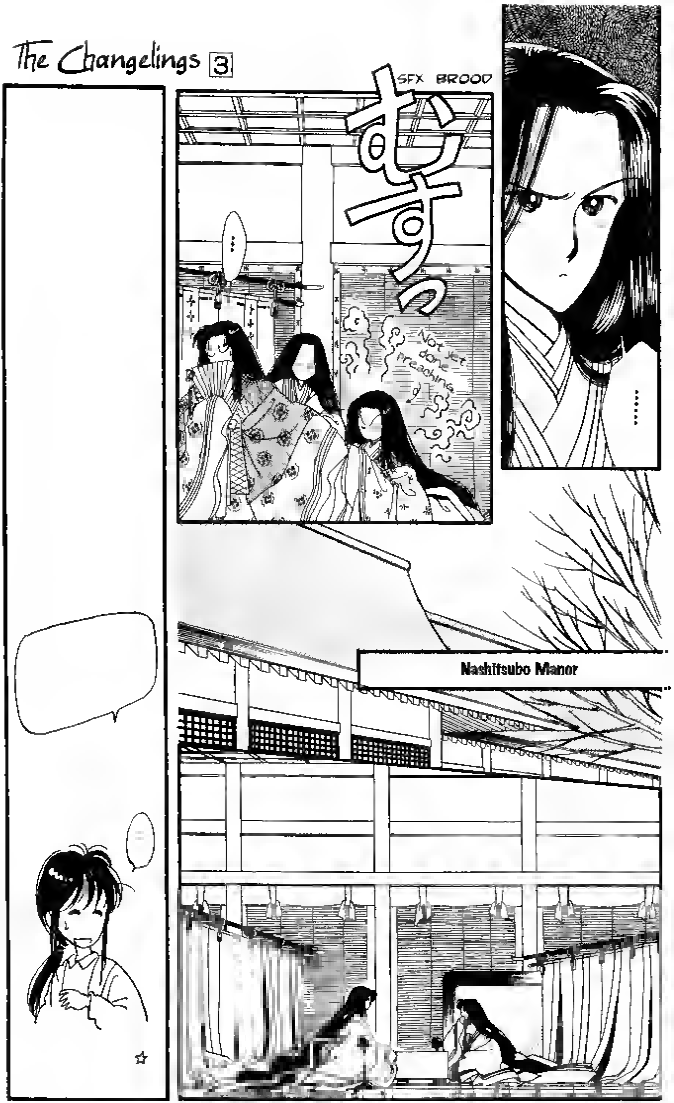
...
ISN'T SHE THE ONLY SIBLING YOU HAVE..?
BUT INSTEAD..
NOW WHEN SHE'S MISSING, YOU AREN'T EVEN THINKING OF GOING OUT TO LOOK FOR HER..!
ALL YOU CARED ABOUT WAS THE CROWN PRINCESS
WHEN SHE WAS SICK, NOT ONCE DID YOU GO TO VISIT HER.
ISN'T IT HIGH TIME FOR
YOU TO TAKE UP YOUR DUTY AS A BROTHER AND SEARCH FOR HER EVEN IF YOU HAVE TO FLIP OVER EVERY ROCK TO DO SO?!
OR ARE YOU STILL AFRAID OF OFFENDING THE CROWN PRINCESS ?!
such a heartless person ?!
WAHH WAHH
You don't have to go that far
WHY ARE YOU...


IT'S NOT THAT I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT NEE-SAMA.
I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT GOING BACK TO BEING A MAN AND SEARCHING FOR HER.
Though it's still a worry.
Two Kira no dujyous!
THOUGH IF I WERE LUCKY AND FOUND NEE-SAMA
BUT THE CROWN PRINCESS WOULD NEVER ALLOW ME TO GO HOME
PEOPLE WOULD BE ALARMED IF I SNEAKED OUT AND DISAPPEARED TOO
IF THAT HAPPENED, THEN FATHER WOULD HAVE A HEART ATTACK FOR REAL THIS TIME.
WE COULD SWITCH ROLES BEFORE WE CAME BACK
BUT IT WON'T DO TO HAVE NEE-SAMA GO INTO HIDING UNTIL HER HAIR GROWS TO THE STANDARD LENGTH *
And then we'd both have to disappear for a long time!?

*T/N In the Heian imperial court, floor-length tresses were considered the height of beauty for women. There's a saying, "A woman's hair is her life"! To cut it would mean that she no longer a woman and if cut, the hair would never reach the proper length again.

LADY NAISHI NO KAMI...
THAT PATHETIC WAY OF THINKING OF YOURS...
NAISHI NO KAMI!
screech
GOSH...
I STILL CAN'T COME UP WITH A GOOD SOLUTION
LADY SANMINO-TSUBOMI
HAS COME TO SUMMON YOU TO THE CROWN PRINCESS
SAVED!
I CAN ESCAPE SAYURI'S ASSAULT FOR NOW
DID YOU... HEAR...
THAT... SA... YURI?
I'LL JUST BE...



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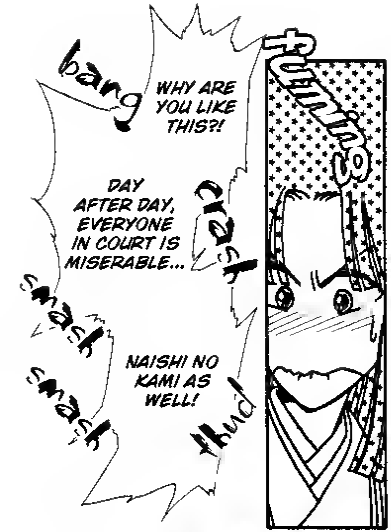
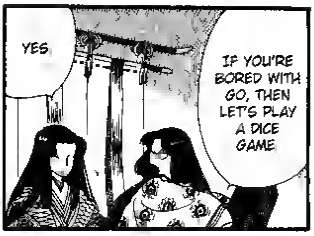
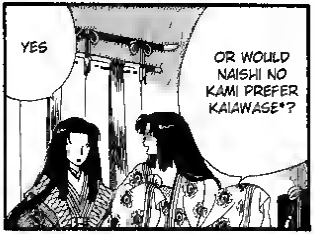
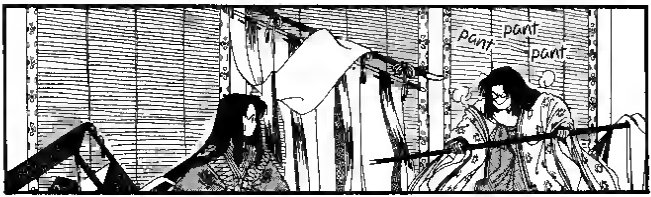
HOW DO I GO ABOUT DOING THAT?
clack
BUT
TO RETURN TO BEING A MAN AND GO SEARCH FOR NEE-SAMA
IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T
clack
UNDER-STAND HOW SAYURI FEELS
OH.
ARE YOU SERIOUSLY GOING TO MAKE THAT MOVE?
NAISHI NO KAMI,
YOU KEEP SPACING OUT ALL THE TIME!
AH...
clatter clatter
Enough!!

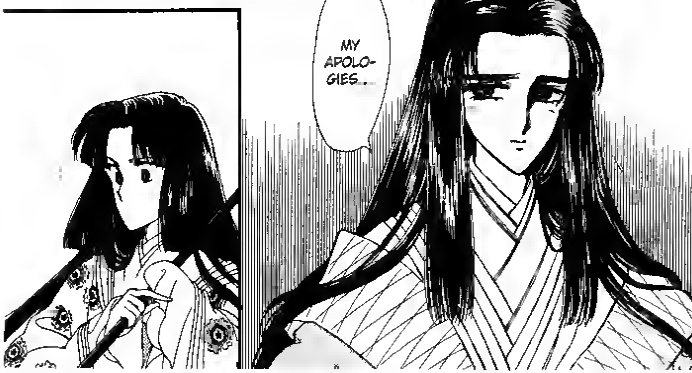
T/N Kaiawase = A shell matching game popular with court aristocrats during the Heian Period









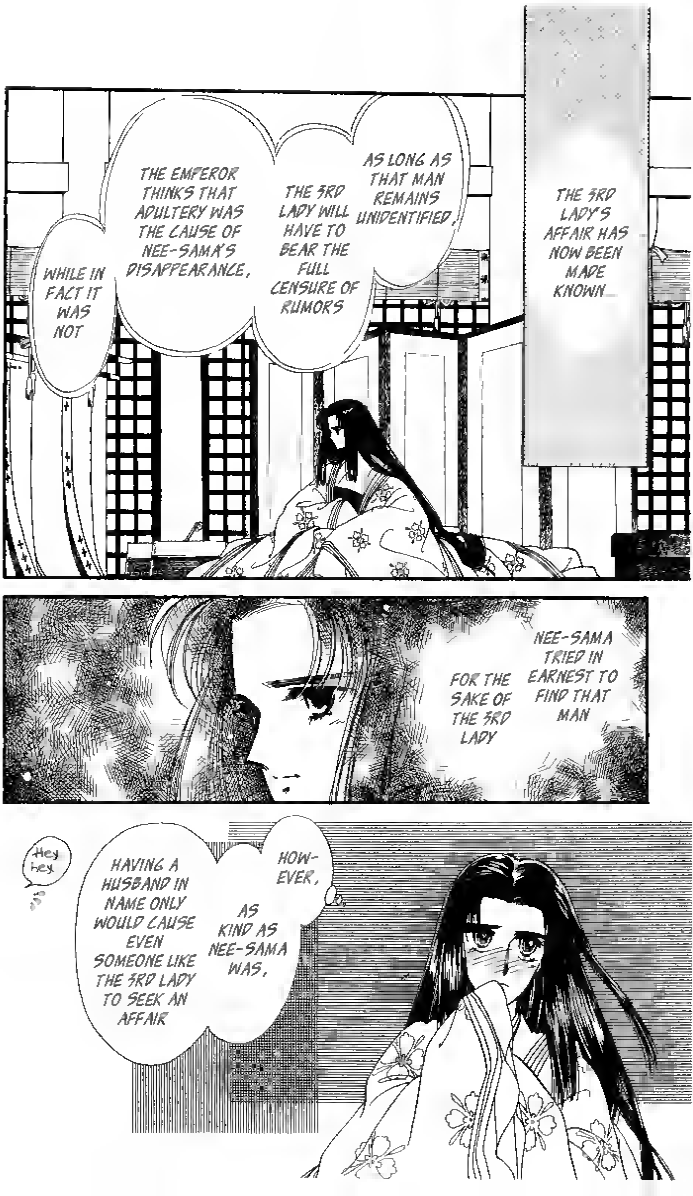


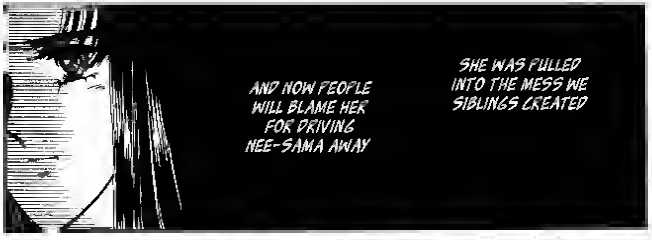
AND IT MUST PAIN YOU TO THINK OF WHERE HE MIGHT BE SEEKING WARMTH IN THIS COLD WEATHER
HE'S YOUR DEAR BROTHER,
IS BECAUSE KIRA NO CHUIJOU IS MISSING, I UNDERSTAND
THE REASON WHY EVERYONE IS GLOOMY
IS THAT REALLY HOW YOU THINK?
MY LADY. .
HIS MAJESTY IS IRKED ?
I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM SO IRRITATED BEFORE.
BUT THE EMPEROR IS BROODING ALL DAY LONG. HIS MOOD IS EVEN FOULER THAN YOURS
NOPE.
THOSE WERE THE EMPEROR'S WORDS
THAT'S MORE LIKE IT
So her admiration of nee-sama was just a fad after all

NAISHI NO KAMI MUST NOT HAVE HEARD ABOUT IT YET, RIGHT?
NO SURPRISE. EVEN HIS MAJESTY JUST LEARNED OF THE NEWS TODAY!
MY LADY...
IT WAS THE 3RD LADY.
HUH?
HE SAID IT WAS UNACCEP-TABLE...
YEAH.
HE WEARS SUCH A FIERCE FROWN THESE DAYS
I WAS CERTAINLY FRIGHTENED...
?
WHAT WAS THE PROBLEM?
APPARENTLY, THE BABY THAT THE 3RD LADY IS CARRYING ISN'T KIRA'S,
BUT THAT OF ANOTHER MAN WITH WHOM SHE ACQUAINTED HERSELF!

LOOKING INSIDE, HE SAW THAT IT REGARDED KIRA NO CHUIJOU
SO, HE SUBMITTED IT TO THE IMPERIAL PALACE, THINKING THAT IT MIGHT CONTAIN A CLUE ABOUT KIRA NO CHUIJOU'S DISAPPEARANCE
"THE SECRET'S OUT?!
HOWEVER,
IT WAS A LETTER WRITTEN BY THE 3RD LADY TO ANOTHER MAN!
THE 3RD LADY'S INDISCRETION WAS EXPOSED?!
If the child that's born doesn't look anything like Kira-sama, then we won't be able to conceal it any longer.
It's unmistakably our doing that drove Kira-sama away.
In.
LAST NIGHT,
WHILE A CITY GUARD WAS ON SURVEILLANCE AS USUAL
HE CAME ACROSS A LETTER.

MY LADY!
TO SAY SUCH THINGS IN FRONT OF NAISHI NO KAMI
THE EMPEROR SAID KIRA-SAMA RAN AWAY BECAUSE OF HIS WIFE CHEATING ON HIM.
THE NEWS IS PROBABLY FLYING AROUND THE CAPITAL BY NOW.
THE RECEIVER'S NAME WASN'T WRITTEN, SO WE STILL DON'T KNOW WHO HE IS.
BUT THE CROWN PRINCESS WAS SNOOPING IN ON OUR CONVERSATION AND...
HIS MAJESTY ONLY SAID THIS IN THE PRESENCE OF THE MAIDS,
MY DEEPEST APOLOGIES.
But it was worse of them to send me away right?!
...
My lady you should be more considerate of Naishi no kami's feelings
Hmph
.....
I'M SORRY TO HAVE YOU WORRY OVER SUCH A PERSONAL MATTER
IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'M FINE
BUT TO HAVE YOU LEARN OF IT IN THIS MANNER IS...
HE ASKED US TO BREAK THE NEWS TO YOU DELICATELY
ACTUALLY, HIS MAJESTY HAD SAID THAT AS KIRA-SAMA'S SISTER, SOONER OR LATER THE RUMORS WOULD FIND YOU


THE 3RD LADY'S AFFAIR HAS NOW BEEN MADE KNOWN...
AS LONG AS THAT MAN REMAINS UNIDENTIFIED,
THE 3RD LADY WILL HAVE TO BEAR THE FULL CENSURE OF RUMORS
THE EMPEROR THINKS THAT ADULTERY WAS THE CAUSE OF NEE-SAMA'S DISAPPEARANCE,
WHILE IN FACT IT WAS NOT
NEE-SAMA TRIED IN EARNEST TO FIND THAT MAN
FOR THE SAKE OF THE 3RD LADY
HOW-EVER,
AS KIND AS NEE-SAMA WAS,
HAVING A HUSBAND IN NAME ONLY WOULD CAUSE EVEN SOMEONE LIKE THE 3RD LADY TO SEEK AN AFFAIR
Hey hey



While

The brother was heavily contemplating.

Over here, at Udaijin's manor...

...
HAVE YOU NO SHAME ...?!
WHAT A DISGRACE YOU ARE...
WHAT WERE YOU NOT SATISFIED WITH...?!
I CHERISHED YOU WITH THE BEST CARE.
YOU'VE NEVER LEFT THE HOUSE...
HE COULDN'T HAVE GONE AND CUT OFF ALL HIS HAIR SOMEWHERE, COULD HE?*
HE'S STILL YOUNG. THE BLOOD MUST HAVE RUSHED TO HIS HEAD...
POOR KIR-SAN.
WITH SUCH AN INNOCENT FACE, WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT SHE TOOK ANOTHER MAN TO BED?
YOU CAN'T JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER.
Do you know how people will talk?!

PR note: * Cutting off one's hair meant to enter monasticism

WE'RE THE TOPIC OF GOSSIP AT THE MOMENT!
TALK ABOUT POOR SECURITY.
MY, MY...
UDAIJIN NEVER NOTICED ANOTHER MAN SNEAKING IN TO SEE HIS DAUGHTER...?
...
SOB SOB SOB
I'M SO ASHAMED I CAN'T SHOW MY FACE IN PUBLIC ANYMORE ...!
glare
TELL ME, WHO IS HE..!
I WON'T BE ABLE TO FACE MY BROTHER.
IF THIS GOES ON..

N-
QUICK!!
SPIT OUT THE CULPRIT'S NAME!
NOW,
ANY WAY YOU LOOK AT IT, HE MUST BE SOME TITLELESS LOWLIFE
HE'LL GET WHAT HE DESERVES AND YOU'RE TO BE A NUN!
NO
I CAN'T TELL YOU
I CAN'T
NO MATTER WHAT ...!!

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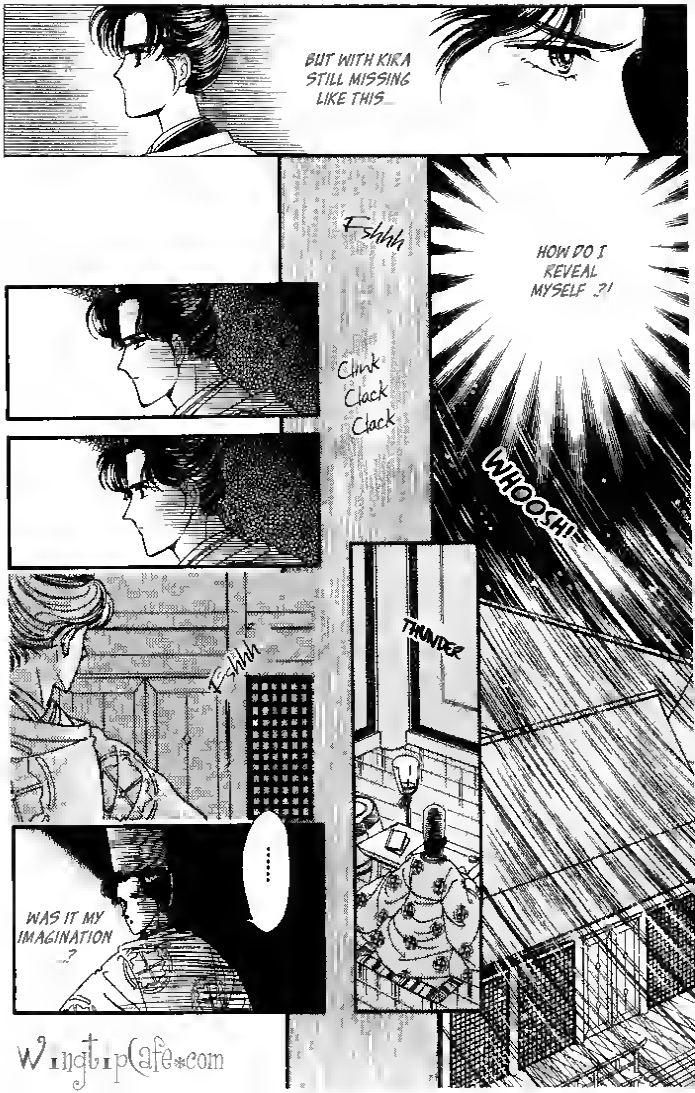
BUT...
THEY WOULD HAVE FOUND OUT THE TRUTH ONE DAY ANYWAY.
BUT...
SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU-SAMA!
Jolt
.....

Well,
LATELY I BEEN SLEEPING POORLY
DID I FALL ASLEEP?
When the courtiers heard about Lord Kira's disappearance,
the first to pass out,
Was this person, Saishou no Chuujou...
Not only did he have an affair with the 3rd lady resulting in her pregnancy But he also made indecent advances towards Lord Kira
KIRA'S DISAPPEARANCE WAS MY FAULT
HE MUST HAVE RUN AWAY AND BECAME A MONK SOMEWHERE BECAUSE OF THIS...!
With those thoughts in mind, he became thoroughly distressed.
NOOOOOO!!

There was also the additional ruckus of the 3rd lady's affair.
Saishou no Chuujou currently spends his days in fear of being found out.
SOONER OR LATER, THEY'LL FRY MY NAME OUT OF HER MOUTH
AT THIS MOMENT,
RUMORS ABOUT THE 3RD LADY MUST BE FLYING ALL OVER THE CAPITAL
YOU CAN GET UP FINE NOW?
MOTHER
WHEN THAT HAPPENS...
IT SURE TOOK YOU A WHILE TO RECOVER THIS TIME
IT WAS NO SURPRISE YOU FELL SICK
WITH YOUR DEAR FRIEND KIRA-SAN DISAPPEARING SUDDENLY,

CHORE
SPEAKING OF WHICH, I FEEL SORRY FOR THE 3RD LADY
Thank you.
YES...
THE LOWEST OF THE LOWEST!
FROM A WOMAN'S STANDPOINT, A MAN NOT CARING FOR THE FEELINGS OF A GIRL BEARING SUCH A BURDEN IS
EVEN THOUGH THERE'S BAD TALK ABOUT HER, SHE WON'T GIVE OUT HIS NAME.
SHE MIGHT HAVE COMMITTED ADULTERY, BUT IT'S NOT HER SOLE DOING.
OH, WHAT'S THE MATTER?
NOTHING --
I JUST FEEL SICK
ALL OF A SUDDEN AGAIN.
.....
Good Grief, someone call me a doctor!
I DON'T WANT TO CONCEAL THE SITUATION ABOUT 3RD LADY FROM EVERYONE ANY LONGER
I'M THE WORST
THAT'S RIGHT



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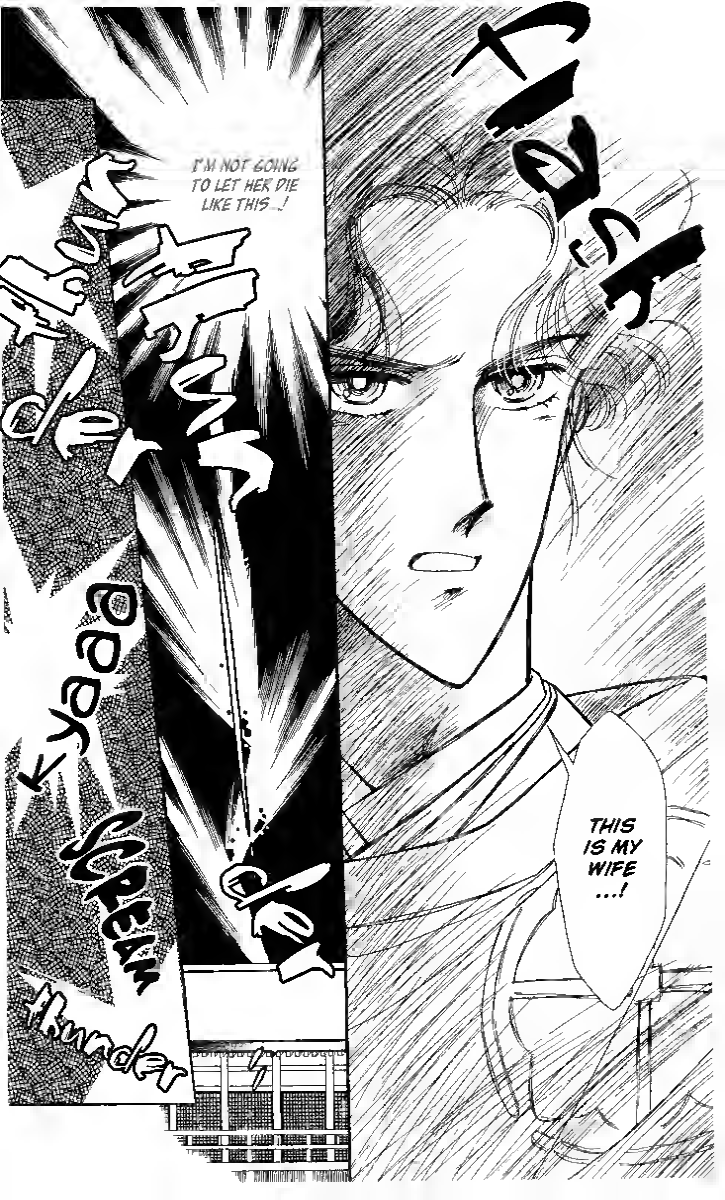
Gasp
COULD IT BE KIRA?!
COULD IT...
flash
Kya!
whoosh
whoosh
whoosh
THE 3RD LADY...?!
.....
.....!!

WAHHH
CHUU JOU-SAMA ...!
.....
WHAT'RE YOU DOING ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS...?!
FATHER ...
FATHER ...
TRIED TO MAKE ME SAY YOUR NAME... HE WAS SO MAD!
HE'S GOING TO MAKE ME BECOME A NUN. HE LOOKED LIKE HE WAS READY...
HIC ...
TO... SEND ME TO A TEMPLE RIGHT AWAY...
BECOME A NUN?!
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS...?
I...
I...

WHERE'S MINO? WHY ISN'T SHE WITH YOU?
WHY ARE YOU HERE ALONE...?
FATHER SENT MINO AWAY
AS PUNISHMENT FOR DELIVERING MY LETTERS
BUT I HATE MINO!
SHE TOLD ME YOU WOULDN'T LIFT A FINGER TO HELP, EVEN THOUGH THINGS ARE AS THEY ARE NOW...
SHE SAID THAT 'YOU' WERE JUST A RAKE WHO PLAYED WITH WOMEN ...
I HATE MINO FOR INSULTING CHUUJOU-SAMA!
Sshhh
.....
Sshhh
Sshhh
grab
HIME

SHE RAN ALL THE WAY HERE BY HERSELF, THROUGH THE WINTER STORM, JUST TO SEE ME
I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING TO HELP, AND NOW SHE'S BACKED INTO A CORNER LIKE THIS
SIGH
THE SOUND
HIME...
PLEASE COME INSIDE FIRST!
THE BABY IS ALMOST DUE. HOW RECKLESS YOU ARE
.....
BUT SHE STILL CAME HERE TO SEE ME, BELIEVING IN ME, AND RELYING ON NO ONE BUT ME...!

.....
EH?
TH-THAT LADY IS...
ah
CHUUJOU-SAMA, IS SOMETHING WRONG? I HEARD NOISES.
Paint
KAEDE! WHAT'RE YOU STANDING THERE LIKE AN IDIOT FOR?
I'LL CARRY HER IN. THE DOCTOR... HURRY! CALL THE DOCTOR!
HIME?!


I'M NOT GOING TO LET HER DIE LIKE THIS ..!
THIS IS MY WIFE ...!
Thunder
SCREAM
yaaa

RUN AMOK IN CHAOS
noo
aka
kya
WHAT TERRIBLE THUNDER. IT'S AS IF IT'S SUMMER
N-NAISHI NO KAMI,
YOU'RE STILL SO CALM IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS?
ARE YOU SCARED, SAYURI?
I-I'M TERRIFIED! THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN A THUNDER-STORM IN THE MIDDLE OF WINTER.
Thunder
KYAAAA!!
I'M CONCERNED
Flash

He used to faint before anybody else.
YES.
IN THIS STORM?!
SAYURI, I'M GOING TO NASHI-TSUBO.
NAISHI NO KAMI?!
DRESS ME.
Nashitsubo Manor
MY LADY!
grab
IN HER BED-CHAMBER SHE'S PROBABLY SOUND ASLEEP...
I'm scared!
WHERE'S THE CROWN PRINCESS?
AH LADY NAISHI NO KAMI!
flash
rumble
Kyaa
Ahhh!
Hide
.....

Empty
EH?
MY LADY!
WHERE'RE YOU, MY LADY?!
HE...
HERE.
I'M HERE!
CROWN PRINCESS?

WHO
WOULD'VE THOUGHT THAT THIS BRAT WOULD GET SO SCARED
AMUSED!
LOOK AT YOU.
WHERE HAS ALL YOUR FEISTINESS GONE?
flaa
aash
NAISHI NO KAMI, IF YOU CAME TO MOCK.
WHAT?!
THUNDER
WHAA
WHAA!
KYAAHH
THUNDER
AAAHH
Well leave her to you.
tmp
tmp
tmp
tmp

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Ah... so this is what it feels like to be a man.
JOY
JOY
NO MATTER HOW CONCERNED I AM ABOUT THE CROWN PRINCESS, FOR ME TO FACE THE STORM WITHOUT COWERING
AND THEN EMBRACE THE FRIGHTENED LADY SO TIGHTLY...
AH.
I'M SORRY
but still doesn't let go
YES?
NAISHI NO KAMI
S-STOP
I CAN'T BREATHE
BADUM!
WHAT A SURPRISE
SUCH AMAZING STRENGTH, AS THOUGH YOU WEREN'T A WOMAN
.....
?
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THAT'S BECAUSE I'M 100% MALE FROM HEAD TO TOE

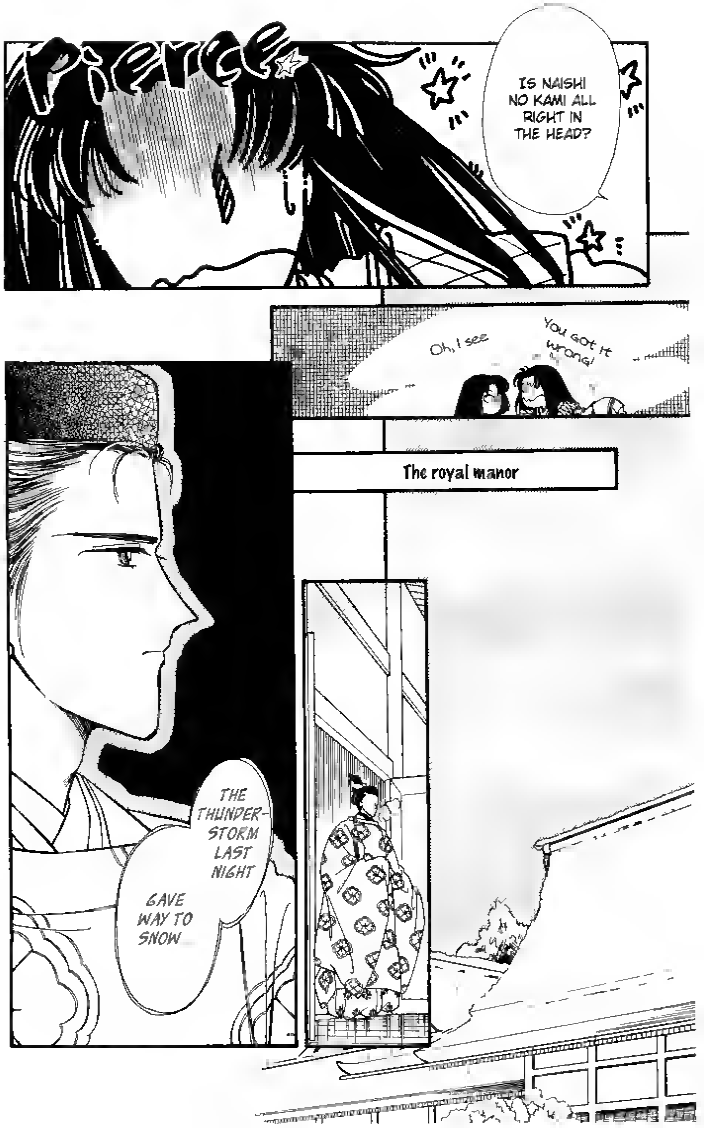
I WERE MALE, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?
MY LADY
IF..
IF NAISHI NO KAMI WAS A MAN?
CRAP!
I SLIPPED UP
Eh?!
NO I MEAN
IN THAT CASE, I WOULD BECOME YOUR WIFE
surprise
ARE YOU SERIOUS, MY LADY?!

BOOM
SURE THEN I CAN SHED THIS CROWN PRINCESS TITLE
AND I DON'T HATE NAISHI NO KAMI AT ALL
THERE'S NO BETTER TIME TO CONFESS!!
I'D AT LEAST LIKE THE WOMAN I LOVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH...
MY LADY...
EVEN IF I HAVE TO DISAP-PEAR,
BUT IF THE CROWN PRINCESS AGREES TO STAND BY MY SIDE, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO RETURN TO BEING A MAN AND GO LOOK FOR NEE-SAMA LIKE SAYURI TOLD ME TO
IF THINGS GO WRONG, I MIGHT HAVE TO DISAPPEAR AS WELL
I CAN'T PASS OFF AS A WOMAN FOREVER
MORE-OVER,

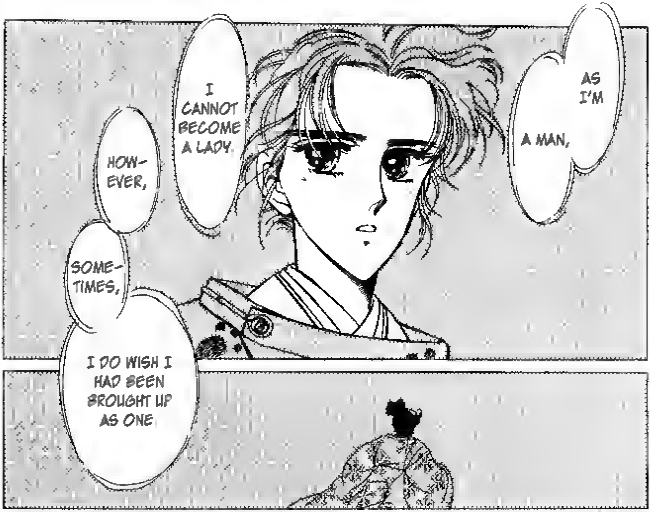
THIS MAY BE SUDDEN.
AND PLEASE DON'T BE ALARMED BUT...
EEEK
EEEK
!!
N- Naishi no Na- kami is ...
A man?!
slush slush

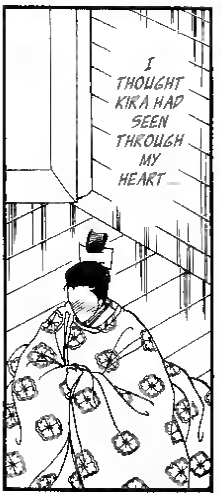
J-
You're-
J-
I'M NOT JOKING.
THOUGH IT WOULD BE AWKWARD IF YOU ASKED FOR PROOF.
shocked
BUT NAISHI NO KAMI IS
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL IN THE PALACE.
YOU'RE GRACEFUL, AND FEMININE.
NAISHI NO KAMI, ARE YOU A TRANSVESTITE?
WHERE DID YOU LEARN THAT WORD FROM?
OKAY
NECESSARY? HOW SO?!
WELL, IT WAS NECESSARY
OF COURSE.
YOU WANT TO KNOW?
BUT AFTER YOU KNOW MY SECRET,
YOU MUST BECOME MY WIFE.

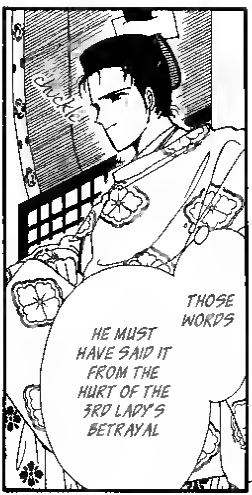
IF YOU PROMISE TO LOVE AND CHERISH ME
I WOULDN'T MIND
ABSOLUTELY, I'LL LOVE AND CHERISH YOU FOREVER.
YESSS, I DID IT!
YOU MUST NOT TELL ANYONE ABOUT THIS
IF ANYBODY ELSE FINDS OUT, MY SISTER, MY FATHER, SADAIJIN, AND I,
WOULD NO LONGER BE ABLE TO FACE ANYONE, AND WOULD HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TAKE UP MONASTICISM!
TELL ME QUICKLY!
DOES KIRA KNOW ABOUT THIS? AND SAYURI AND SADAIJIN, ARE THEY IN THIS TOO?!
I KNOW, I KNOW SO HURRY UP AND TELL ME!
WHY ARE YOU A TRANS-VESTITE?
EH?
TRANS


Pierce
IS NAISHI NO KAMI ALL RIGHT IN THE HEAD?
Oh, I see
You got it wrong!
The royal manor
THE THUNDER-STORM LAST NIGHT
GAVE WAY TO SNOW

BUT NOW,
IT'S AS IF YOU WERE JUST A FIGURE IN A FARAWAY DREAM
THAT LAST NIGHT, WHEN I PARTED WITH KIRA,
BY THE SAKURA TREE AT SHISHIN-DEN MANOR,*
UNDER THE MOON-LIGHT, AMIDST THE WIND
WHERE DID YOU SEEK REFUGE FROM THE STORM LAST NIGHT?
CONCEIVED
KIRA...
THERE WAS NOTHING ELSE ALL AROUND US,
KIRA...
T/N: * the hall where ceremonies were held







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AND I HAVE NO IDEA HOW SERIOUS SADAIJIN IS...
Can't show my face to Kira anymore...
NOW THAT HIS DAUGHTER'S INFIDELITY IS KNOWN, UDAIJIN HAS CALLED OFF HIS SEARCH PARTIES
THE 3RD LADY TOO, KIRA ADORED HER SO MUCH WHAT WAS THERE NOT TO BE SATISFIED WITH?
BUT HOW WAS HE FOOLED BY THAT WIFE THIEF?
IT'S HOPELESS, YOUR MAJESTY...
I HAD LAID DOWN HOPE OF FINDING HIM ONCE HE DISAPPEARED
I SUPPOSE THAT THERE IS GOOD REASON TO SUPPORT HIS DISAPPEARANCE
.....
I'D BE VERY MUCH CONTENT
SOB
SOB
SOB
AND EVEN IF WE FIND HIM, HE'LL JUST COME BACK TO A MISERABLE LIFE HERE..
I CANNOT BEAR TO SEE THAT.
AS LONG AS HE'S SAFE...

EVEN SO,
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO GET ON A HORSE AND LOOK FOR HIM MYSELF
Ah, I hate this
chatter
chatter
THE MAIN HALL IS SO NOISY..
WHAT'S GOING ON?
snap
ERM
WELL...
RUMORS ABOUT KIRA NO CHUUJOU, SOME ABOUT SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU
AND THEY'RE PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME SAY ANYMORE THAN THIS
ABOUT KIKA?
COULD IT BE...
THAT SOMEONE HAS FOUND A CLUE ABOUT KIKA...?!

OH, THAT RUMOR?
IT RAGED THROUGH THE WHOLE PALACE JUST LIKE THE STORM LAST NIGHT.
IT SEEMS SO.
I'D LIKE TO HEAR IT FROM YOU, A PERSON WHO CONSIDERS AND JUDGES RUMORS WITH A LEVEL HEAD.
HYOUBU-KYOUNO-MIYA
BUT I'M NOT CERTAIN IF SUCH NEWS IS APPRO-PRIATE FOR YOUR MAJESTY'S EARS...
WHAT?
WE FINALLY KNOW WHO THE 3RD LADY'S PARTNER IS
MIYA...
SORRY...

A WOMAN IN LOVE IS SO VALIANT, YOUR MAJESTY.
THE 3RD LADY, WITH HER BABY ALMOST DUE, FLED UDAIJIN'S HOUSE,
AND FARED THE TERRIBLE STORM LAST NIGHT BY HERSELF JUST TO SEE HIM
.....
AND, THE MAN IN QUESTION IS...?
IT'S MOST UNEXPECTED,
BUT ALSO, PERHAPS, THE MOST EXPECTED
JUST TELL ME WHO HE IS!

IT'S SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU
SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU ..?!
.....
WHY ?
ISN'T HE...
KIRA'S BEST FRIEND ..?!

HE'S THE MOST DAZZLING AMONG THE COURTIERS, BUT HE'S ALSO RATHER FRIVOLOUS
IT'S TRUE THAT
HE'S POPULAR WITH BOTH HIGH AND LOW RANKED COURTIERS, AS WELL AS WITH THE COURT LADIES. JUST LIKE KIRA
SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU HAS AVOIDED ATTENDANCE FOR ALMOST HALF A YEAR NOW WITH REASONS RANGING FROM HIS HEALTH, TO PAYING HIS RESPECTS AT THE TEMPLE
THINKING BACK,
DROVE KIRA TO DISAPPEAR ....!
BUT HE BETRAYED HIS BEST FRIEND
BY HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH THE WIFE
AND DROVE HIM, HIS BEST FRIEND

clatter
WHAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND IS THAT ONE TIME...
HOW HE ACTED TOWARD KIRA NO CHUUJOU THAT NIGHT.
WAS IT A WAY OF SEALING HIS LIPS ON THIS MATTER?
ERASE SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU'S NAME FROM THE COURTIER'S LIST!
HE'S DECOM-MISSIONED!

Believing that Saishou no chuujou was the cause of Kira's disappearance, the Emperor found it hard to control his rage.
Rashly, Saishou no chuujou was banished from the court.
In that era, admittance to court was recognized as a symbol of those belonging to the upper class.
Some might argue that this was
The most terrible dishonor and cruelest of all punishments for Saishou no chuujou.
.....

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KIRA

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Credits

Manga The Change! (The Changelings)
Story : HIMURO Saeko
Illust : YAMAUCHI Naomi

Raw provider Michex raw manga
Translated by Chibisys
Proof read by ran_exo
Edited by goldhair
QC by elvisrules

: WANTED :
Japanese - English translators
(who can translate w thout furigana)
for "A Delicious Relationship"
and "Ashita no Ousama"
HELPS NEEDED
Contact us at
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EVEN THOUGH KIRA ISN'T HERE RIGHT NOW,

I STILL WANTED TO EXPRESS MY CONGRATULATIONS IN HOPE THAT IT WOULD BE HAPPY NEWS FOR KIRA TOO.

SHE MAY NOT BE KIRA'S CHILD, BUT SHE WAS BORN OF THE THIRD LADY WHOM KIRA LOVED SO MUCH.

BUT WHAT IF HE HAS ALREADY LEFT THIS WORLD?

AS LONG AS

clack

HE'S STILL ALIVE, NOTHING MATTERS

HOW WILL KIRA FEEL IF HE HEARS THE CROWD TALK ABOUT THE THIRD LADY GIVING BIRTH TO A CHILD THAT WASN'T HIS?

MAYBE KIRA WENT AWAY,

BECAUSE HE COULDN'T BEAR THAT PAIN

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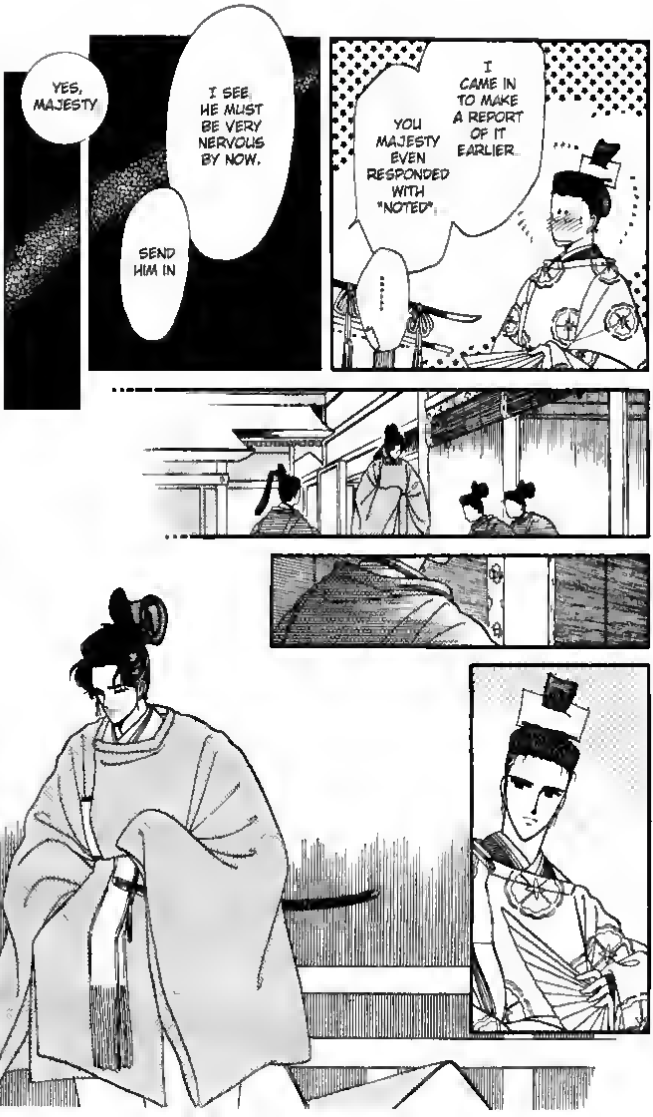
WHAT?
AH--
OH.
...MAJESTY
YOUR MAJESTY
gasp
I WAS ENGROSSED IN MY THOUGHTS ABOUT OF KIRA AND UNINTENTIONALLY SLAPPED THE FAN IN A SIGNAL THAT CALLS FOR A MAID
OH, THAT'S RIGHT
WELL...
sh-shh
EH?
OH,
I HEARD THE FAN CLAPPING SOUND
SO I THOUGHT YOUR MAJESTY HAD CALLED FOR ME ABOUT THE MATTER OF SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU...
TODAY IS THE FIRST DAY OF SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU'S RETURN TO ROYAL AUDIENCE, YES?
HAS HE ARRIVED?
HE'S COME, AND WAITED FOR A LONG TIME, SIRE


I CAME IN TO MAKE A REPORT OF IT EARLIER.
YOU MAJESTY EVEN RESPONDED WITH "NOTED".
.....
I SEE. HE MUST BE VERY NERVOUS BY NOW.
SEND HIM IN
YES, MAJESTY

REALLY THAT SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU ..?
.....
IS THIS...
HIS LOOKS AND INTELLIGENCE GAVE HIM AN OVER-CONFIDENT AURA, BUT THIS...
HE USED TO LOOK SO COCKY AND FULL OF HIMSELF.
VERY HARD FOR YOU, SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU.
I LET EMOTION OVERCOME MY JUDGMENT AT THE TIME AND PUNISHED YOU TOO HARSHLY.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN ...

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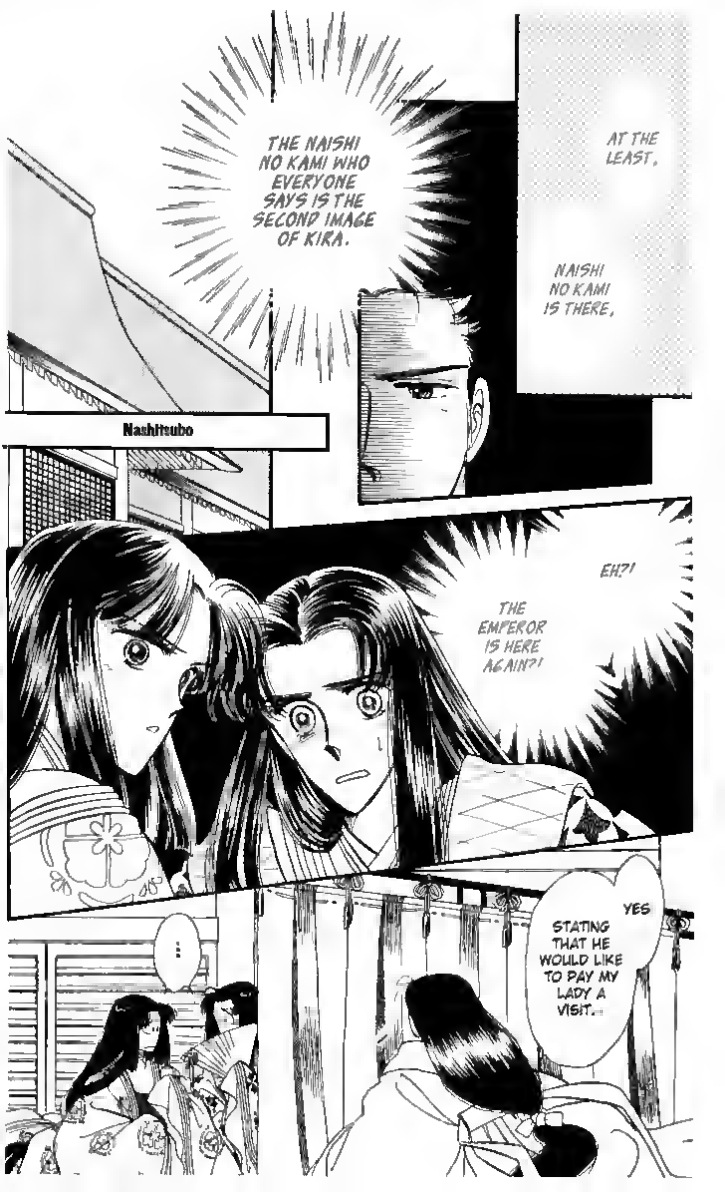
AND YOU SEEM TO SINCERELY REGRET YOUR DEEDS.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN LITTERLY SEVERE TO BE SO GRAVELY CONDEMNED BY SOCIETY EVEN FOR A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME.
FOR A MAN OF YOUR WEALTH AND TITLE,
.....
I'LL NEVER REPEAT THIS MISTAKE AGAIN ...
YOUR MAJESTY.
I'M GRATE FUL.
AS FOR UDAIJIN AND SADAIJIN, I'LL TALK TO THEM MYSELF.
FROM NOW ON, LIVE A HAPPY LIFE WITH THE THIRD LADY.
THIS WAY

EVERYTHING IS SETTLED AS IT SHOULD BE
EXCEPT FOR THE FACT THAT KIRA IS STILL MISSING
.....
Rise
SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU, THE THIRD LADY
AND EVERYONE ELSE HAVE NOW RESUMED LIFE AS IF NOTHING HAD HAPPENED
YOUR MAJESTY, WHERE TO?
NASHITSUBO MANOR.
...


THE NAISHI NO KAMI WHO EVERYONE SAYS IS THE SECOND IMAGE OF KIRA.
AT THE LEAST,
NAISHI NO KAMI IS THERE,
Nashitsubo
EH?!
THE EMPEROR IS HERE AGAIN?!
YES
STATING THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO PAY MY LADY A VISIT.
...

glance
THAT'S NOT APPROPRI-ATE..
MY LADY,
I WONDER WHO EXACTLY HE COMES TO VISIT.
HE COMES HERE EVERYDAY LATELY.

HURRY UP AND PUT THE SCREEN AROUND NAISHI NO KAMI.
FINE

Surely.
I CAN TELL
HE'S AFTER YOU, NAISHI NO KAMI.

AND IS THAT MY FAULT?!
BUT THE EMPEROR'S VISIT TO NASHITSUBO FOR THE PURPOSE OF COURTING NAISHI NO KAMI IS ALREADY THE HOT TOPIC AROUND THE PALACE

PLEASE STOP JOKING. THERE'S NO REASON TO BE HAPPY ABOUT A MAN'S ATTRAC-TION FOR ME.
You're the number one beauty around here anyway
HAVING THE EMPEROR PURSUING YOU MUST BE A THRILL FOR A WOMAN.
HOW ABOUT THAT?

MY PEACEFUL COURT LIFE IS HANGING IN THE BALANCE TOO
BECAUSE OF HIS REGULAR VISITS.
I'VE MANAGED TO SURVIVE SO FAR, BUT LATELY THE PIERCING GLARE FROM THE IMPERIAL CONSORTS' HANDMAIDS HAS BEEN OVERWHELMING...
I SEE.
THE EMPEROR USED TO MAKE REGULAR TRIPS TO NASHITSUBO BEFORE
BUT WHEN HE ARRIVED, HE'D ONLY TALK TO KIRA NO CHUUJOU.
HOWEVER,
annoyed
THIS TIME, HIS PURPOSE IS DEFINITELY NAISHI NO KAMI!
NO WONDER THE GOSSIP HAS STARTED.
IT'S STILL NOT MY FAULT!
GREETING, NAISHI NO KAMI.

.....
DECOMMISSIONED
hnf

.....
GOSH.
THE SCREENS ARE ALL OVER AS USUAL.
YOUR MAJESTY MUST BE VERY FOND OF NAISHI NO KAMI.
NASHITSUBO IS MY MANOR, BUT EVERY TIME YOU COME, YOU ALWAYS GREET HER FIRST.
AH
P_lip
THEN WE WON'T BE
A THIRD WHEEL TO YOU ANYMORE.
COME!
EVERYONE, LET US GO.
EH?! CROWN PRINCESS?!

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twirl
GRR
RRR
THAT INSUFFERABLE BRAT!
WHAT IF HE JUMPS ME?!
SILENCE...
.....

I SEEM TO HAVE UPSET THE CROWN PRINCESS.
JUST NOW, SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU HAS RETURNED TO HIS POST IN THE COURT. HE SAID HE DEEPLY REGRETTED WHAT HE DID TO YOUR BROTHER.
THE NEWBORN DAUGHTER OF THE THIRD LADY IS IN PERFECT HEALTH. AND THE MOTHER HAS RECOVERED.
YES
YOU MUST BE EXHAUSTED, TAKING CARE OF SUCH A SELF-CENTERED CHILD
ERM
NOT AT ALL.
THE THING IS
I FEEL SO SAD WHEN I THINK OF HOW KIRA MIGHT TAKE THE NEWS

WHAT DID HE JUST SAY ?!
EH?
SEEMS SO EMPTY RIGHT NOW.
MY PULLING THE STRINGS TO HAVE YOU ENTER THE COURT
FUNNY, ISN'T IT?
AT THIS POINT, I MIGHT AS WELL CONFESS
I WAS VERY UPSET TO SEE HOW KIRA USED TO DOTE ON THE THIRD LADY.
I THOUGHT IF I COULD ARRANGE FOR HIS BELOVED SISTER TO LIVE IN THE PALACE,
HE WOULD BE SO CONCERNED WITH HER THAT HE WOULDN'T HAVE TIME TO TEND TO THE THIRD LADY ANYMORE
THEN KIRA WOULD COME HERE REGULARLY...
AND SPENT TIME WITH ME LIKE HE USED TO.
I DON'T KNOW
IF KIRA UNDERSTOOD ANY OF MY FEELINGS ..
BUT THE NIGHT BEFORE HE LEFT,
HE SAID THAT HE WISHED HE HAD BEEN BROUGHT UP AS A LADY

AND IT SEEMS THE EMPEROR HAS FEELINGS FOR HER AS WELL.
IS THAT BECAUSE NEE-SAMA LOVES THE EMPEROR?!
BROUGHT UP AS A LADY?
HOWEVER, HE ISN'T HERE ANYMORE...
E...
EH?
B-BUT IN THE EMPEROR'S EYES, NEE-SAMA WAS A MAN...
THEN IT MEANS HE...
ACK!
LOVES NEE-SAMA EVEN THOUGH HE THOUGHT SHE WAS MAN..?!
RECENTLY
MY VOICE HAS CHANGED TO A LOWER TONE.
UHH..
'this is bad.'
EVERY TIME WE MEET, YOU TALK SO LITTLE.
YOU'RE REALLY SO SHY.
CREEP
NO WAY!

WHEN WE MET AT KITASAGA.
SHE DIDN'T TALK MUCH THEN EITHER...
RIGHT
ORIGINALLY, I HAD KIRA BECAME A COURTIER BECAUSE I HEARD THAT HE LOOKED VERY MUCH LIKE HIS SISTER. THE LADY I'D MET AT KITASAGA
AND WHEN HE WAS PRESENTED, I FOUND THAT THEY LOOKED EXACTLY ALIKE.
YES, AS IF THEY WERE THE SAME PERSON!
THEREFORE, I BECAME SO FOND OF KIRA THAT
I FELT UPSET WHEN HE MARRIED THE THIRD LADY.
IN ORDER TO MONOPOLIZE KIRA'S TIME,
I INSISTED ON HAVING HIS SISTER TAKE THE POSITION OF NAISHI NO KAMI.
BUT...
EVEN IF SHE MAY NOT REALIZE I WAS THE MAN SHE MET,
NAISHI NO KAMI WAS DEFINITELY THE LADY OF KITASAGA
ONCE..
!!!

I MET A BEAUTIFUL LADY
THEN I HEARD THAT THE SON OF SADAIJIN LOOKED VERY MUCH LIKE HER, SO I ARRANGED FOR HIM TO HAVE HIS GENPUKU AND BECOME A COURTIER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
KIRA LOOKED SO MUCH LIKE THE LADY I MET AT KITASAGA ...
IT WAS AS IF THEY WERE THE SAME PERSON
SOMETIMES IT MADE MY BRAIN JUMBLED IN ODD PLACES ...
A BEAUTIFUL LADY
WHO LOOKED LIKE NEE-SAMA?
MAYBE BECAUSE I FANCIED TO MYSELF THAT KIRA WAS THE LADY I MET THAT TIME, I LOOKED AT HIM WITH THE EYES OF A MAN LOOKING AT A WOMAN, WITHOUT KNOWING IT.
SO THE EMPEROR FELL IN LOVE WITH NEE-SAMA BECAUSE SHE RESEMBLED THAT LADY...?
OR PERHAPS I WAS JUST LOOKING AT YOU THROUGH KIRA...
Eh?

LOOKING AT ME?!
I...
I..
W-WHAT'S HE THINKING? THIS EMPEROR!
ISN'T HE IN LOVE WITH NEE-SAMA AS THE LADY OF KITASAGA?!
.....
peek
IS SOMETHING WRONG?
WHY DID HE FALL SILENT ALL OF A SUDDEN ..?
?
Back up
HE'S LOOKING AT ME
H ..

Rise
Flinch
IF HE JUMPS ME, I DON'T STAND A CHANCE. HE'LL DEFINITELY OVERCOME ME!!
Panic!!
WITH SUCH INTENSE EYES----?!
WH-WHAT DO I DO?
? ? ?
.. GOOD DAY.
Clatter
BUT I'M SAVED FOR TODAY
NAISHI NO KAMI!
WH-WHAT JUST HAPPENED?
DID I DO SOMETHING THAT UPSET HIM?

SHHH! MY LADY!!
YOU'RE TOO LOUD!!
WHAT WAS THAT?! I COULD MAKE SYRUP OUT OF YOUR LITTLE CHITCHAT! YOU PROMISED ME YOU'D TAKE ME AS YOUR WIFE, REMEMBER?!!
and what do you mean by syrup?
AWW, WEREN'T YOU TWO LOVEY-DOVEY?
CROWN PRINCESS
IT'S ALRIGHT. THE MAIDS HAVE GONE INTO HIDING.
Hmm..
He'll make a compliant husband, if they get married.
THE POINT IS ..
THE EMPEROR LOVES NEE-SAMA ...?
EH?
WHAT?
WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?!
Tell me.. tell me

WELL
EVEN THOUGH I'VE MOVED TO MY GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE AT THE EDGE OF THE CAPITAL TO REPENT OF MY WRONGDOINGS
I THOUGHT I WAS BRACED FOR ANYTHING
BUT IT STILL CAME AS A SHOCK
I STILL CAN'T SHAKE OFF THE GUILT OF DOING THAT TO KIRA...!!
IF I HADN'T GONE THAT FAR...
KIRA WOULDN'T HAVE RUN AWAY.
EVERYTHING WAS MY FAULT.
MY FAULT ...!!
rustle

OH, KITASAGA?
I KNEW ABOUT THAT TOO.
3 YEARS AGO, HE MET HIS DREAM GIRL THERE. IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT
THAT TIME HE SNUCK OUT TO HIS WET NURSE'S HOUSE.
HE SAID HE'D NEVER SEEN A GIRL SO PURE AND INNOCENT IN HIS LIFE.
PURE AND INNOCENT...?
BUT HE DID SAY THAT GIRL RESEMBLED NEE-SAMA A GREAT DEAL
What exactly about her could be called pure and innocent? She was a tomboy.
Kira-neesama at that time.
FROM WHAT HE SAID,
IT SEEMS HE WAS CONVINCED I WAS THAT LADY.
MY GOODNESS!
SO NAISHI NO KAMI REALLY IS A TRANSVESTITE AFTER ALL?!
WHEN YOU SAID YOU WANTED ME TO BE YOUR WIFE, THAT WAS ALL A LIE, WASN'T IT?!
.....

THE LADY WHO LOOKED LIKE ME COULD BE NO ONE BUT NEE-SAMA.
OUR FAMILY OWNS A MOUNTAIN VILLA AT KITASAGA.
No $air!
CONNECTING THE DOTS TOGETHER
push
BE QUITE, PLEASE, MY LADY. YOU'VE LEARNED TOO MANY INAPPROPRIATE WORDS
EH?!
AND JUDGING FROM NEE-SAMA'S WORDS BEFORE SHE LEFT, SHE HAD FEELINGS IN RETURN.
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, THE EMPEROR FELL HARD FOR NEE-SAMA.
I'VE NO IDEA HOW THE EMPEROR COULD HAVE SO TERRIBLY MISUNDERSTOOD IT
IF NEE-SAMA LOVES THE EMPEROR,
COULD THIS BE THE REASON FOR HER ABSENCE?
ANYWAY,
UM... I DOUBT THAT...
THIS IS SO MESSED UP..
MEANING HE KNEW KIRA WAS A GIRL?!!
I'm so afraid that he would love her as a man...

As he speculated on his sister's disappearance, supposing reasons both romantic and rather trite
The brother Kira couldn't help but be amused.
Well,
However...
THAT SISTER OF MINE
WE KNOW FOR SURE THAT THE THIRD LADY'S PROBLEM WASN'T THE CAUSE...
pfft
RAN AWAY OUT OF HEART-BREAK?
SOUNDS TOO RIDICULOUS TO BE TRUE
BUT THEN AGAIN, MAYBE IT'S FATE.
AND I HAVEN'T ANY OTHER CLUES
She did mention she wanted to turn back to a girl's role.
Someone like that nee-sama.
This is totally bizarre.

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WHEN I ARRANGED FOR HER TO COME TO THE COURT,
MY OBJECTIVE DIDN'T CONCERN NAISHI NO KAMI
The emperor had decided to
pour all his feelings for Lord Kira on Lady Kira..
I JUST WANTED TO HAVE KIRA BY MY SIDE AS HE HAD BEEN BEFORE HIS MARRIAGE...
AND AFTER ALL, NAISHI NO KAMI IS THE REAL LADY OF KITASAGA
BUT
KIRA MAY NEVER RETURN ANYMORE
IF THAT'S THE CASE, WHY DON'T I JUST REACH OUT FOR ANOTHER KIRA WHO IS WITHIN MY GRASP?
MUST I FEEL SO LONELY FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE?

I WAS TOO AFRAID OF PEOPLE SUSPECTING MY TRUE INTENTIONS, AND WORRIED THAT EVERYTHING BEING OUT IN THE OPEN WOULD CREATE A MESS BEYOND REPAIR
WHEN I HEARD ABOUT THE MARRIAGE BETWEEN KIRA AND THE THIRD LADY, I SHOULD HAVE SNATCHED HIM AWAY FROM THE BEGINNING, EVEN THOUGH I MAY HAVE RISKED EXPOSING MY FEELINGS TO THE PUBLIC
I'LL DEFINITELY FOLLOW MY DESIRES
BUT THIS TIME,
I'M IN THE POSITION TO WISH FOR ANYTHING, AFTER ALL.
SHE MAY BE A LITTLE SHY AND AFRAID OF STRANGERS, BUT THAT'S NO TERRIBLE FLAW
HER DUTY AS NAISHI NO KAMI HAS BEEN IMPECCABLE
AND AS THE DAUGHTER OF SADAIJIN, MY COUNCILOR, I MAY EVEN MAKE HER AN EMPRESS WITHOUT ANY OBJECTION
NAISHI NO KAMI WHETHER IT'S TITLE OR FAMILY STATUS, SHE HAS IT ALL

Naishi no kami's to be promoted to an imperial consort?
B-BUT ..
WHAT A SUDDEN PROPOSAL
I AGREE
AND TODAY'S DISCUSSION IS ..
B-
B-BUT
B-
BUT YOUR MAJESTY...!
.....
E-E-I didn't say anything, your majesty
Eek

YOU MAY BEGIN TO DETERMINE AN AUSPICIOUS DAY FOR THE CEREMONY.
W-
WASN'T THE DECISION A LITTLE RASH...?
DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE TRYING TO TALK ME OUT OF IT.
C-COME TO THINK OF IT, ISN'T THIS A GREAT NEWS?
YES, LUCK HAS FINALLY TURNED ITS WHEEL TOWARD SADAIJIN.
As for Kira-sama's matter you should just let it go
Pat
N-NO, SUCH A CEREMONY IS IMPOSSIBLE
THEY'RE GOING TO KNOW FOR REAL THIS TIME, THAT NAISHI NO KAMI IS A MAN!!

Seiryouden manor
Hurry!
HIS MOUTH IS FOAMING ?!
My goodness!
SOMEBODY, GET A DOCTOR !!
SADAI-JIN--SAN?!
Thud
HIS MAJESTY IS MAKING HIS WAY HERE.
I- I CAME TO INFORM YOU THAT
rush
chatter
chatter
chatter
NAISHI NO KAMI-SAMA!
YES, I WONDER WHAT THAT WAS ABOUT.
ISN'T THERE A BIG COMMOTION COMING FROM SEIRYOUDEN MANOR?

W-WHY WOULD HE COME ALL THE WAY TO SEIYOUDEN?!
NORMALLY HE GOES TO THE CROWN PRINCESS'S NASHITSUBO AT THE TIMES HE KNOWS I'LL BE THERE...
...

I'LL CHECK IT OUT!
SAYURI?
.....

I'LL GIVE HIM A BIG PUNCH— OR BITE AND RUN ALL THE WAY BACK TO SANJOU MANOR!
I WON'T GIVE A DAMN, EVEN HE'S THE EMPEROR!
I- I DON'T CARE IF I'M TOO PARANOID
BUT IF IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S ABOUT TO TRY ANYTHING,

?!
TO MEET WITH NAISHI NO KAMI-SAMA.

I BEG ...
AH!
PLEASE FORGIVE MY INSOLENCE!
BUT... PLEASE DON'T STEP IN ANY FURTHER!!
THE EMPEROR
Ju
Jump
Oh my your majesty!
You can't go in yet
You can't!
YOUR MAJESTY!!
cla
ng

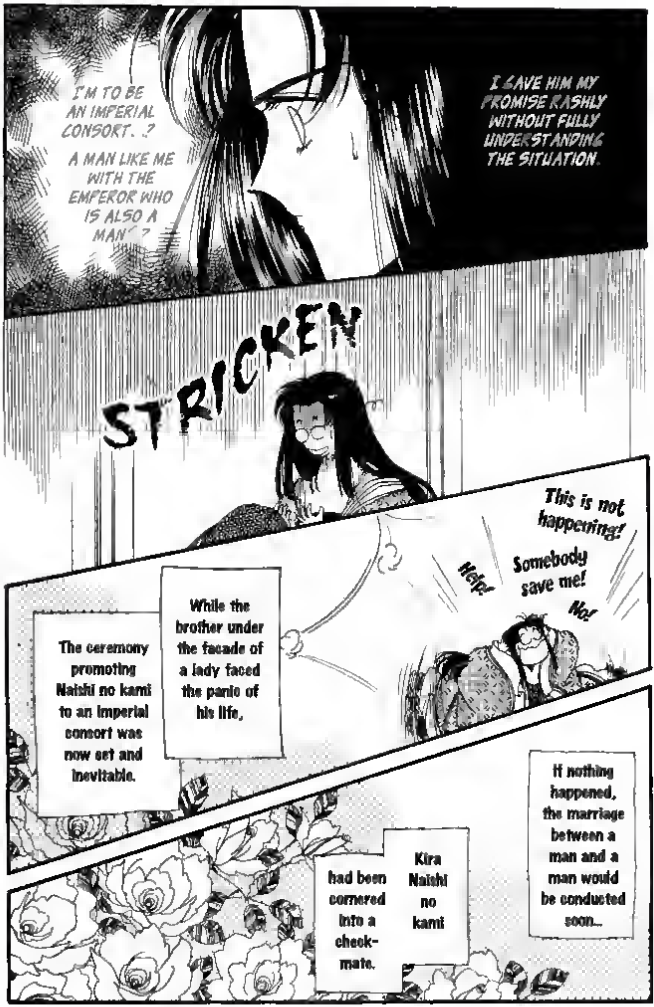
CHUUJOU-SAMA...
HIME ..!!
WHY DID YOU COME OUT?
YOU STILL HAVE A FEVER. STAY INSIDE AND REST..
...
BUT...
I HEARD THAT
CHUUJOU-SAMA
WAS SEVERELY PUNISHED BY THE EMPEROR.
YOU'VE BEEN MADE SO MISERABLE BECAUSE OF ME.
AND I CAN'T
HELP YOU WITH ANYTHING..
.....

.....
.....
NAISHI NO KAMI,
PLEASE FORGIVE MY INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR.
THE CEREMONY
OF PROMOTING YOU TO AN IMPERIAL CONSORT HAS BEEN ARRANGED.
WHAT?!

Kira
I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE STILL UPSET ABOUT KIRA NO CHIJOU'S DISAPPEARANCE.
BUT I ALSO TRULY WISH TO MAKE YOU MY CONSORT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
vaise
I SHALL NOT COMPROMISE YOU BEFORE THE CEREMONY.
YOU TOO...
PLEASE DON'T DO ANYTHING FOOLISH
WOULD YOU PROMISE ME NOT TO BE RASH?
BUT WILL REMOVE THESE SCREENS RIGHT AWAY.
OTHER-WISE, I'LL NOT WAIT UNTIL THE CEREMONY
PLEASE BEAR IN MIND THAT I'M ALLOWED TO DO ANYTHING I WISH.

I'LL WAIT UNTIL THE DAY YOU BECOME MINE.
THEN,
huh.
YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT SUICIDE.
YES! I SWEAR I WON'T DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT!!!
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME! WHO'S GOING TO LET YOU HAVE YOUR WAY WITH ME HERE?!!
U-
UNDERSTOOD, SIR.
YOU HAVE MY WORD!!
!!!
SUG☆
I THOUGHT
I WAS GOING TO FAINT, THOUGH I HAVEN'T DONE SO IN A LONG TIME

TELL ME!
WHAT DID HE SAY TO YOU?!
DID HE DO SOME-THING TO YOU?!
NAISHI NO KAMI! DID HE COME HERE ABOUT KIRA-SAMA'S MATTER?!!
HE LOOKED VERY ODD.
N-NO ...
Naishi no kami!
Bam
IT CONCERNS
MY BECOMING AN IMPERIAL CONSORT
SO HE SAID
Imperial consort?!
I-I'LL SEND A LETTER TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE SITUATION AT SADAIJIN'S.
I'LL GO FIND THE TRUTH DIRECTLY FROM HIS MOUTH.
spin spin
What is it? It's not a joke?
AH--
NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, !
tmp tmp tmp


I'M TO BE AN IMPERIAL CONSORT...?
A MAN LIKE ME WITH THE EMPEROR WHO IS ALSO A MAN...?
I GAVE HIM MY PROMISE RASHLY WITHOUT FULLY UNDERSTANDING THE SITUATION.
STRICKEN
This is not happening!
Help!
Somebody save me!
No!
The ceremony promoting Naishi no kami to an imperial consort was now set and inevitable.
While the brother under the facade of a lady faced the panic of his life,
If nothing happened, the marriage between a man and a man would be conducted soon...
had been cornered into a check-mate.
Kira Naishi no kami

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KIRA

embrace
HIME
YOU MUST TRY TO RELAX.
AND THINK OF WHAT'S BEST FOR OUR BABY
CHUU-JOU--SAMA ..
YOU'RE NOT AT FAULT. ALL SINS WERE MINE ALONE.
CAST AWAY BY YOUR OWN FATHER AS WELL THAT'S A CRUEL PUNISHMENT FOR A LADY OF YOUR BIRTH.
YOU WERE
PLEASE DON'T BE DISTRESSED ANY MORE THAN THIS.
KEEPING THE THIRD LADY HAPPY...
SUFFER ANY MORE THAN THIS.
YES,
I CAN'T MAKE HER
.....

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IS THE ONLY WAY TO REDEEM MYSELF WITH KIRA RIGHT NOW .!
Were all baffled.
The citizens of the capital, especially those in the court,
By now

As a result,

It appeared to be the main reason that had driven Kira chuujou, the emperor's favorite and the son of the powerful Sadaijin, to run away without leaving a trace.

Would have had a secret love affair with Saishou no chuujou, the dashing young courtier who, like Kira, was expected to have a bright future ahead of him.

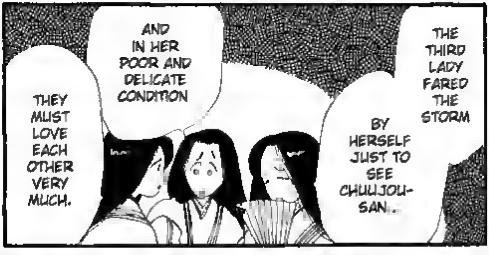
Nobody had imagined that the strictly-brought-up Third Lady, who Kira chuujou whole-heartedly adored,

作者の立場で"ちぇんじ!"の小冊子を作ろーと思い 希望者を募ったとこ3 せいぜい400人位と思っていたら1000人余りの応募となりかなり後悔しています。

けど ついでにとったキャラベストのアンケート結果がおもしろーなので(※9月現在は集計途中)ちぇんじ! 4巻にものっけますね。お楽しみに♡

あと 小冊子応募はもうしめかりましたんで 編集部に問い合わせたりしないでねぇ

the couple was, inevitably, subjected to a harsh censure from the public



And so the talk went...

The Palace
They were simply foolish.
All rebukes were eventually reduced to pity.
But since the couple sincerely accepted their fault,
And had acted in the name of love.
.....
CERTAINLY...

IT WON'T MAKE KIRA COME BACK
BESIDES, NO MATTER HOW SEVERELY WE PUNISH SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU,
PEOPLE ARE SLOWER TO CRITICIZE THOSE TWO, BECAUSE KIRA, THE DIRECT VICTIM, IS STILL MISSING
.....
YOUR MAJESTY,
THE MESSENGER SENT THE NEWS THAT THE THIRD LADY HAS DELIVERED A DAUGHTER SAFELY.
FOR A GENTLE PERSON LIKE KIRA, THAT'S NOT ENTIRELY IMPOSSIBLE
!
MAYBE
KIRA KNEW THAT HE COULDN'T DEAL WITH THE SCANDAL SO HE RAN AWAY ONCE HE LEARNT THE TRUTH ABOUT THE BABY
!

HAVE YOU HEARD?
DAIJIN-SAN IS COMPLETELY CRAZY ABOUT HIS NEW GRAND-DAUGHTER.
IT'S A GIRL
HE'S EVEN ALLOWED THE THIRD LADY TO RETURN HOME
MOREOVER, THE EMPEROR SENT A CONGRATULATION GIFT TO DAIJIN'S HOUSE.
IT MUST MEAN THAT HIS MAJESTY HAS CANCELED HIS ORDER TO DECOMMISSION SAISHOU NO CHUUJOU.
TRULY.
WHAT GREAT NEWS.
.....
A DAUGHTER ?

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Credits

Manga: The Change! (The Changelings)
Story : HIMURO Saeko
Illust : YAMAUCHI Naomi

Raw provider : Michax raw manga
Translated by : Chihaya
Proof-read by : Iys
Edited by : goldhair

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